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HISTORICAL ADDRESS.

WALKER.



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ADDRESS

AT THE

TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY

OF THE

FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST, HARTFORD,

October 11, 1883,

BY

GEO. LEON WALKER, Pastor.

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THE HISTORICAL ADDRESS.

BY GEORGE LEON WALKER, PASTOR.

A historical discourse has been announced as one of the features of this celebration of the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the First Church of Christ in Hartford. But the attempt to tell the story of two and a half centuries at a single sitting of an afternoon congregation, is much like depicting the course of the Connecticut river on the page of a school-boy's atlas. The map-maker indeed undertakes the attempt, and succeeds after a manner. But it is by heroically ignoring all minor details and confining his notice only to the main features of mountain headland and long river-sweep and abrupt bend and general direction and losing necessarily thereby almost all the beauty and a chief part of the truth of the object he attempts to delineate. Still a school-chart of the Connecticut is better than no map of it at all, and a desperately foreshortened account of this Church's experiences may be preferable to none.

I am comforted, furthermore, in forecasting the deficiencies of the present discourse, by remembering that other papers, to be presented on special topics connected with our Church, will in a considerable degree supplement those deficiencies, and discharge me of any present obligation to refer at length to the matters with which they are particularly to deal. Nor can it I think be inappropriate for me also to say, that foreseeing the inevitable limitations of an anniversary discourse to tell adequately the tale which ought to be told, I have already in a state of large readiness for the press, and hope before many months to complete and to publish, a more detailed narrative of this First Church's history than any

such occasion as this would give hearing for. And I refer to this the more freely at this time, as affording me opportunity to add that some statements of the present discourse, which may be more or less unexpected or counter to statements heretofore made by others, I shall in those more leisurely pages undertake to verify; leaving them here simply as statements, invoking only a suspension of judgment till the promised evidence be produced.

It is therefore but to a very compressed and birds-eye view of this story of two hundred and fifty years, that I now a little while invite you.

On the 11th of October, 1633, Rev. Thomas Hooker and Rev. Samuel Stone, both ministers of repute in England, who had landed in Boston from the same ship which brought Rev. John Cotton and Mr. John Haynes the 14th of September previous, were ordained, respectively, Pastor and Teacher of a Church of Christ at Newtown, now Cambridge, Massachusetts. The Church over which they were thus set had in all probability been organized at an earlier day, and quite likely the previous autumn, as the congregation who mainly composed it had been established in a house of worship "with a bell upon it" in Newtown sometime in 1632. This probable earlier period of church-gathering accounts for Winthrop's silence respecting any such important event as the gathering of the Church, in his account of the ordination of its officers, and corresponds with Johnson's designation of it as the eighth in order in New England; a position in relation to others of which there appears no adequate evidence that this Church should be deprived, and which carries its birthday some months, and perhaps a year, back of that first distinctly recorded date which we celebrate to-day. The silence of Winthrop respecting the institution of any other officers than the Pastor and Teacher, makes the suggestion reasonable that William Goodwin, who had arrived with several other prominent members of the Church on September 16th of 1632, had been inducted into his office of Ruling Elder at a previous date, and perhaps at the formation of the Church.

But whenever gathered, this Newtown Church doubtless proceeded substantially after the same manner as did the other early churches of Massachusetts Bay. These churches were all of them formed of men and women who had been members of the English Establishment. Few of them had been, in their own land, distinctly Separatists in principle. Many of them could have lived always in the communion of the church of their birth, if a few points of its polity could have been reformed in consonance with their convictions. They were Puritans, not Separates. Still, three thousand miles of watery distance, and the homogeneous quality of a wilderness society, were great facts which could not be without influence in shaping the new ecclesiastical framework of their religious life. The example, and the direct influence also of the avowedly Separatist church of Plymouth, had not been inoperative. In the gathering of the church of Salem in 1629, which in a manner set a pattern for all the others in the Bay, that agency is distinctly traceable. And in the case of this particular Newtown Church it is quite certain, furthermore, that however it may have been with the membership in general, the Pastor had come from his exile in Holland, and the Teacher from his Puritan Lectureship in England, with quite definitely pronounced convictions of the competency of every congregation of Christian people to constitute themselves into a church, and to appoint the officers they supposed demanded by Scripture.

The particular manner of this self-erection of a band of Christians into a church body-politic, was the solemn adoption of a Covenant, by which visible document of agreement and sacred confederation, the signers regarded themselves as made into a Church of Christ, having all necessary powers of admission, discipline, choice of officers, and ordination of them to their appointed work.

The form of words constituting the Newtown church-covenant is unknown. It has shared the fatality which has buried the entire documentary records of this Church's first

fifty-two years—the most important years to have preserved—in oblivion.

What its phraseology, what the nature of its stipulations, who precisely were its signers, how many, in what order, how nearly it may have agreed with formulas which appear from time to time on the records subsequently, in substantial identity, till the adoption, within the lifetime of some of its present membership, of a formal Confession of Faith and Covenant, of modern and somewhat clumsy type, in 1822—all these things are to a degree uncertain.

The document, however, was not likely to be essentially different from several others of that period which time has spared to us, and of which the covenant of the Boston church, adopted about two years before, is an example. And the names of the signers, at least the male portion of them, can be, for the greater part, sufficiently determined from contemporaneous and shortly subsequent civil records.

The signers were a company of men and women mainly from a region a little to the north and east of London, and chiefly from the county of Essex, who with a few others joined with them had left England under the primary impulse of a desire for liberty to worship and serve God as conscience commanded them.

They had to some considerable extent been acquainted with one another, and especially with the Pastor newly ordained over them; having lived, many of them, in the near vicinage of Braintree and Chelmsford where his fame was a household word. The strengthening spirit of prelatical authority significantly represented in the person of Archbishop Laud, who as bishop of London had a considerable time held them under his severe diocesan sway, left them little hope that the liberties they had come to deem essential to Christ's freemen could any longer have scope in England. One after another of the ancient Papistic usages which they supposed the Reformation to have abolished was reimposed upon them by the harmoniously co-operant authority of the bishop and the king. One after another of their

accepted preachers was silenced and exiled. Some of them were imprisoned and pilloried. The prospect for themselves and their children was darkening daily. It is not strange that in this condition of affairs they turned to the New World as their only hope.

Some time in 1632 a considerable number of them left their homes, and, arrived in New England, began "to sit down at Mt. Wollaston" in the township now known as Quincy. These were by "order of court," in August of that year, removed to Newtown. Governor Winthrop, in recording the event on the 14th of the month, calls them by the double appellation of the "Braintree Company" and "Mr. Hooker's Company." Mr. Hooker was then in Holland and did not arrive for thirteen months afterward, which of itself suggests the fact corroborated in other ways, that the people gathered in the Newtown church-fellowship were a special companionship, having, many of them, recognized relations of obligation and expectancy, long before he arrived, to the Pastor who was on the 11th of October, 1633, set over them.

The Pastor who at that time was "ordained" was a man who had already exercised a ministry of thirteen or more years, had received Episcopal ordination in the English Church, and had stood in practical pastoral connection with several Christian congregations. His transcendent abilities and his fatherly relationship to this Church and colony demand that even in a cursory sketch like the present, some space be given to his imposing figure.

Thomas Hooker was born at the little township of Marfield, in Leicester Co., England; it is believed on July 7, 1586. The parish records of Tilton parish-church, to which Marfield ecclesiastically belongs, are non-existent previous to 1610, and do not therefore contain the entry of his baptism. They contain, however, the record of the burial of his father, mother, and eldest brother; which last, dying childless, and leaving bequests to his brother Thomas' sons in America, causes the name henceforth to vanish from Tilton memorials.

Marfield is a little hamlet of only five houses (having had

six twenty-two years before Hooker's birth) lying in a pleasant valley a mile and a half north from Tilton hill. With the exception of the one vanished dwelling, some old oak timbers of which still remain, the scene is probably not appreciably different from what it was when looked at through young Thomas' eyes. Still the sweet fields smile with luxuriant harvests around, and still the most prominent object to arrest the eye is the stately church of St. Peter's at "*Tilton super montem*," whose peal of six bells rings out now as it did then from the arches of its beautiful spire. In this really noble church edifice, rising above the thatch-covered village that clusters about the crown of the hill on which it stands, and tenanted here and there by monumental effigies of great personages of the parish back to early in the twelfth century, young Hooker doubtless was baptized, in the font which can still be seen, and gained his earliest impressions of public worship.

From his humble home at Marfield he went at about fourteen years of age to the newly established preparatory school of Market-Bosworth, about twenty-five miles westward from his birthplace. It was probably while he was at this school, and about a year before leaving it for the university, that the great and termagant Queen Elizabeth died, and the uncouth and polemic James succeeded to the monarchy.

Cotton Mather says Hooker's parents "were neither unable nor unwilling to bestow upon him a liberal education," which may in part be true; but he was matriculated "Sizar" of Queen's College, Cambridge, on March 27, 1604, the title signifying a certain inferiority at least, of pecuniary resources. He was however, soon, at some unascertainable date, transferred to Emmanuel college, where he took his degree A. B., in January, 1608, and A. M. in 1611.

Here at Emmanuel, in the very focus of Puritanism in that most exciting period, he resided as undergraduate and afterward as Fellow on Sir Wolstan Dixie's foundation, from about his eighteenth to his twenty-eighth or thirtieth and

possibly even thirty-second year. These were great years in English history. They covered the events of the gunpowder plot, the exile of Robinson and his Scrooby church to Holland, the forcing of Episcopacy by the whilom Presbyterian James into Scotland, the dissolution of James' parliaments, the negotiations for the marriage of prince Charles with the Spanish Infanta, the execution of Raleigh, the outbreak of the Protestant and Catholic struggle of the Thirty-years' war, the planting of Plymouth Colony in America.

But somewhere in this period came to Hooker a greater personal event than any of them, his individual spiritual conversion. This experience was preceded and accompanied in his case with the intensest perturbations of soul, which probably lent something of vigor, and it may be of somberness and severity, to some of his after religious views of the necessary processes of spiritual change.

He appears after this transcendent event in his history, to have fulfilled certain catechetical and lecturing functions at the university; but about 1620 he became rector of the donative parish of Esher in Surrey, a little place sixteen miles west from London. Here he married his wife Susannah, a "waiting gentlewoman" of a Mr. Drake who was the donor of the parish living.

From hence, after some ineffectual attempts to secure his establishment at Colchester in Essex, he went, apparently sometime in 1625 or 1626 to Chelmsford, also in Essex, as Lecturer at St. Mary's church, of which Rev. John Michaelson was rector. These Puritan lectureships were an outgrowth of the religious movement of the age, and were designed to secure a more efficient preaching service than could often be had from the legal incumbent of the parish. From this beautiful church of St. Mary's, Hooker's influence radiated through all the adjacent country. Throngs flocked from all quarters to listen to his words. His personal power over those brought in conference with him was immense.

These facts soon attracted the attention of Laud, then bishop of the diocese, and Mr. Hooker was forced, sometime

late in 1629, against the remonstrance in his behalf of a large body of Conformist ministers of Essex county, to lay down his ministry. Thus silenced, he removed from Chelmsford to Little Baddow, four miles away, and taught a school, having John Eliot, afterwards the Apostle Eliot and who was converted in his family, as assistant. But his influence still haunted the region. Conference with him was still possible and was dreaded by the authorities. Sometime early in 1630 he was cited to appear before the High Commission court, but convinced of the bodily danger of doing so, he forfeited his bonds with the consent of his sureties, and after a narrow escape from his pursuers got off for Holland.

Arrived in Holland Mr. Hooker preached temporarily at Amsterdam, then nearly two years at Delft, and afterward awhile at Rotterdam. Here he united with the celebrated Dr. Ames in the authorship of a volume, published in 1633, entitled "A Fresh Suit against Human Ceremonies in God's Worship." While thus laboring in Holland, overtures were made to him by some of his former Essex County hearers to accompany or follow them into America. Attempts were made to join him with Rev. John Cotton in the same enterprise. These attempts failed, but overtures being successfully made to another to become his assistant, Mr. Hooker crossed to England, narrowly escaped arrest, embarked on the Griffin, and on Sept. 4, 1633, reached Boston, whence he soon joined the waiting flock at Newtown, with the Apostolic salutation, "Now I live if ye stand fast in the Lord."

The other minister who was secured as assistant to Mr. Hooker in the New England enterprise was Rev. Samuel Stone. Mr. Stone was born at Hertford (commonly pronounced Harford), in Hertfordshire, England, and baptized at the church of All Saints, July 30, 1602. He was probably prepared for the university at Hale's Grammar School in his native town, and was matriculated pensioner at Emmanuel College, April 19, 1620. He took his A.B. degree in 1624, and his A.M. in 1627. These university years of Stone, also, were great years in English history. They saw the

departure of the Pilgrims, the accession of Charles First, the marriage with Henrietta Maria, the reception of Laud as the King's chief ecclesiastical adviser, the levy of Charles' first forced loan, the degradation of Chief Justice Crewe, the disastrous issue of the siege of Rochelle.

After leaving the university, Mr. Stone studied divinity awhile in the very peculiar and interesting theological school of Rev. Richard Blackerby, an eminent Puritan divine, who "not being capable of a benefice because he could not subscribe," amid a good deal of tribulation, boarded and educated divinity students for twenty-three years.

From this school, at Aspen in Essex, Stone went, in 1630, as Puritan lecturer to Towcester in Northamptonshire, recommended thereto by Thomas Shepard, some years afterward Mr. Hooker's son-in-law and pastor of the church at Newtown which was formed after the departure of this Church to Hartford. It was while successfully occupying this Towcester lectureship, and doubtless in view of his recognized learning and powers, that the proposals were made to Mr. Stone which brought him into connection with Mr. Hooker and with the Church to which he was to bear the relation of Teacher. A quick-witted, resourceful, able man, his adroitness saved Mr. Hooker from arrest just before their embarkation, and there is no evidence that their intimate relationship was not an occasion of satisfaction to them always. /

Set thus in their appointed positions as practical and doctrinal expounders of the Gospel, and ordained probably by the laying on of the hands of William Goodwin, and some two or three lay brethren of the Church, and having chosen Andrew Warner, and possibly some one beside, Deacon, the Newtown Church was, after the Congregational way, a fully equipped organization, and was ready for the Lord's work. And when autumnal days really settled down in 1633 upon the little town, William Wood, writing this same year, was able to describe the Newtown village as "one of the neatest and best compacted towns in New England."

But Newtown was not destined to be long the home of this

Christian companionship. There was, all along from very near the arrival of the Griffin's company with Mr. Hooker, Mr. Cotton, Mr. Haynes, and Mr. Stone, a certain uneasiness in respect to the Newtown location, all the causes of which are somewhat difficult to trace, but which are more or less distinctly indicated in various documentary records.

It was only seven months after the induction of Mr. Hooker into the pastorate, that the people of "Newtown complained, May, 1634, of straitness for want of land, especially meadow, and desired leave of the Court to look out either for enlargement or removal." Unadjusted at this time, the matter again came before the Court in September, at which time the argument for removal, and to Connecticut as the objective point, had reached this degree of definiteness in statement: "1. Their want of accommodation for their cattle, so as they were not able to maintain their ministers, nor could receive any more of their friends to help them. . . . 2. The fruitfulness and commodiousness of Connecticut, and the danger of having it possessed by others, Dutch or English. 3. The strong bent of their spirits to remove thither." The matter was excitedly discussed. The very "reverend and godly" William Goodwin, the Ruling Elder of the congregation at Newtown," was rebuked for "unreverend speech" in open Court. A grant of enlargement, embracing the territory now known as the towns of Brookline, Brighton, Newtown, and Arlington was made. There was hoped to be an amicable adjustment.

But it did not last. The "strong bent" of the Newtown people's spirits to "remove" continued. The territorial question could not have been the only question. They were perhaps a hundred and twenty families. The population on the same soil is now upwards of seventy thousand souls. Other causes than lack of ground in five townships to pasture the few cattle of Newtown's third summer, must have conspired to create this restlessness. What were they? The historian Hubbard, writing within fifty years of these events, and Dr. Benjamin Trumbull in his account long sub-

sequently of the death of Mr. Haynes, both intimate that considerations respecting the relative influence of the chief leaders of the two towns, Boston and Newtown (Winthrop and Cotton in the one, and Haynes and Hooker in the other) had something more to do with the matter than territorial ones. Some good people have been quite horrified at this. But horrifying or not this was probably the case.

Nor do I see anything in it to apologize for. The Newtown people were in a remarkable degree a homogeneous company, acquainted with one another and with their Pastor in the old country. They came into the pre-existing community of the Bay with something of the distinct character of a body corporate. Their views of civil policy were from the outset somewhat different from their's who preceded them. Mr. Cotton and Mr. Hooker were too positively marked characters, however friendly, always wholly to harmonize; and there were some special provocations, if not to jealousy at least to willingness to move in less closely parallel paths, attending the tumult made in the colony about "Mr. Cotton his sitting down," who had been once applied to as Mr. Hooker's assistant or colleague in the American enterprise.

Add to this, that already, in 1635, the theological differences, which afterward developed into such prominence over the views of Mrs. Anne Hutchinson, and in reference to which Cotton and Hooker were to a degree antagonized, began to show some of their earlier and unhappy results, and it is not strange that with the sense of competency to their own affairs within them, and the sight of the sweet meadows of the Connecticut a hundred miles away alluring them, their "strong bent" to go should at last prevail. It did prevail. Some of them came in the autumn of 1635, suffering immense hardship in the following winter of prolonged and almost unparalleled severity.

But the greater part delayed their pilgrimage till spring. They sold their Newtown habitations to the congregation of Rev. Thomas Shepard, who occupied the vacated village.

And on the thirty-first of May, 1636, they set out on their journey.

It is the season in our New England climate when the landscape has just burst into verdure. The streams run full with the melted snows of winter. The ground is spotted with the anemone and wild violet. The days are alive with promise, but the nights, though short, are damp and chill. The Newtown pilgrims struck out into the unpathwayed woods. Their guides were the compass and the northern star. Evening by evening they made camp and slept sentineled by the blazing fires. One of their number, the pastor's wife, was carried on a litter because of her infirmity.

The lowing of a hundred and sixty cattle sounding through the forest aisles, not to mention the bleating of goats and the squealing of swine, summoned them to each morning's advance.

The day began and ended with the voice of prayer. At some point of their fortnight's journey a Sabbath intervened, when the camp rested and the people listened to the exhortations of their ministers and joined in solemn psalm. Their toilsome and devious way led them near the mouth of the Chicopee, close by where now stands Springfield. Thence was a comparatively easy pathway. Meadow lands were in sight always.

The wide, full river, flowing with a larger tide than now, was crossed on rafts and rude constructed boats ; and on the soil where we now stand, cheered by the sight of some pioneer attempts at settlement made by those of their number who had come the season previous, the Ark of the First Church of Hartford rested, and the weary pilgrims who bore it hither stood still.

Arrived upon the grounds one of the earliest transactions of the new comers was the purchase of the land from the Indians. This seems to have been done in 1636, and Rev. Samuel Stone and Elder William Goodwin were the agents in the negotiation. The territory embraced in the purchase was about coincident with the territory subsequently known as the township of Hartford.

The portion needed for the immediate uses of the little village was parceled out into lots covering most of the older portions of this city: those assigned to the Pastor, the Teacher, and the Ruling Elder fronted on the Little River ; Mr. Goodwin's being on the corner of what is now Arch and Main Streets ; Mr. Stone's next eastward, and Mr. Hooker's beyond Mr. Stone's. Dea. Andrew Warner's lot lay across the Little River opposite Mr. Stone's.

The central point of interest in an ecclesiastical point of view was of course the Meeting-House. This was situated on Meeting-House Yard, a tract of territory covering the ground now known as State House Square, and of somewhat larger extent, especially on the northern and southern sides. Here, somewhere on the portion now covered by the buildings of Central Row, a temporary structure first afforded a meeting place for public worship. This, within about four years, gave place to another destined to fill its purpose nearly one hundred years, situated on the east side of the square, near the corner made by the road leading down to the Connecticut River ; a spot coinciding nearly enough with the vacant space just west of the American House or its Hall. Not far from the meeting-house, on the same public square, were those other more secular conservators of public welfare, the jail, the stocks, and whipping-post. The first burial place of the dead—for men and women would die amid all the hopes of a new colony on a fresh planted continent—lay on the northerly side of Meeting-House Yard, westward upon or above the site of the present City Building. The spot was formerly higher than now, and its leveling removed alike monuments and graves.

The first rude church, however, was hardly built and the plain dwellings of the pilgrims made habitable, before it became necessary to fight for home and life. It was only May, 1637, when the expedition against the Pequots, led by Captain John Mason, took place ; a really heroic and notable enterprise, in which Mr. Stone went with the small army as chaplain, while Mr. Hooker as an encouragement declared

to the departing brothers and sons of the anxious little commonwealth, that "the Pequots should be bread for them." The result was as the Pastor prophesied, and the Pequot's power was permanently broken.

It a little revolts modern feeling, however, to find Mr. Ludlow and Mr. Pynchon and several other presumably good Christians carrying to Boston shortly after, the skins and scalps of the vanquished "Sassacus and his brother, and five other Pequot sachems, who, being fled to the Mohawks for shelter . . . were by them surprised and slain." Even in that hard age there was one man, Roger Williams, who said, "Those dead hands were no pleasing sight."

But even the exigencies of war and wilderness could not divert the attention of those pioneers of the church from questions of theology.

On the fifth of August following the Pequot slaughter in May, Mr. Hooker and Mr. Stone arrived in Boston, through the forests from Hartford—or Newtown, as Hartford was still called in accordance with the Massachusetts name—to attend an ecclesiastical council concerning the peculiar doctrines promulgated by Mrs. Anne Hutchinson and her brother-in-law, Mr. Wheelwright, which had thrown the Bay Colony in general, and Boston church in particular, into ferment. Mr. Ludlow, Mr. Pynchon, and others who carried the Pequot skins and scalps along with them, went as delegates on the same business.

The churches of the entire colony were turmoiled. Mr. Wilson, pastor of the Boston church, and Mr. Cotton, its teacher, had for some months been regarded as taking different sides. Public fasts had been appointed in January and July previous, in view of the dissensions in the churches. In May, some of the Massachusetts soldiers, called out in the Pequot matter, had declined to go with Mr. Wilson as chaplain, alleging that he was "under a covenant of works."

The civil government had shifted hands on the issues involved, Governor Vane losing his election and returning to England. In this condition of things a Synod was called,

to which the representatives of the scarce-rooted Connecticut churches went. The sessions lasted twenty-two days. Rev. Peter Bulkley of Concord and Mr. Hooker of Hartford were moderators. As a result of the deliberations, eighty-two opinions more or less intimately connected with Mrs. Hutchinson's teachings were condemned as, "some, blasphemous, others erroneous, and all unsafe." It was further resolved with special reference to Mrs. Hutchinson's Bible-reading meetings, that though females meeting "some few together" for prayer and edification might be allowed, yet that "a set assembly where sixty or more did meet every week, and one woman took on her the whole exercise" was "disorderly and without rule." The assembly broke up on the 22d of September, and so Mr. Hooker and Mr. Stone had chance to go back to Hartford after more than two months' absence, during which time, doubtless, Ruling Elder Goodwin had "exercised by way of prophecy" in their place.

The following year, 1638, witnessed the preliminary proceedings, very imperfectly recorded, of the formulation of that body of Fundamental Law, drawn up at the direction of the Court by Roger Ludlow, which has been called by Dr. Leonard Bacon the "first written constitution in the history of nations." But our chief interest in the matter on this occasion is not a historic one, looked at from the point of civil administration. The interest as connected with this Church is two-fold. It is, first, that the form of government here in distinct prescription established, was simply an extension to the domain of secular affairs of the principles already adopted in religious matters—the mutual covenant and agreement of those associated, as under God the ultimate law. And second, and more particularly, because of the agency in establishing this principle, of the wise and far-sighted Pastor of this Church. We are indebted for the discovery of definite evidence of this agency, to the skill and research of our distinguished antiquarian townsman, Dr. J. H. Trumbull. The evidence lay undiscovered more than two and a quarter centuries in a little almost undecipherable manuscript volume,

written by a young man in our neighbor town of Windsor. In it is found an abstract of Mr. Hooker's lecture given on May 31, 1638. The doctrine laid down in the discourse is, "That the choice of public magistrates belongs unto the people by God's own allowance. . . . That they who have the power to appoint officers and magistrates, it is in their power, also, to set the bounds and limitations of the power and place to which they call them."

The preacher declares that "the foundation of authority is laid, firstly, in the free consent of the people;" and the "use" which he derived from the principles laid down was an exhortation to take the liberty they had in their power.

Dr. Bacon says, "That sermon by Thomas Hooker from the pulpit of the First Church of Hartford is the earliest known suggestion of a fundamental law, enacted not by royal charter, nor by concession from any previously existing government, but by the people themselves—a primary and supreme law by which the government is constituted, and which not only provides for the free choice of magistrates by the people but also 'sets the bounds and limitations of the power and place to which' each magistrate is called." Eight months later the Fundamental Laws embodying these principles were "sentenced, ordered, and decreed." It is impossible not to recognize the Master-hand. It diminishes nothing of the proper honor of Roger Ludlow to say that the Pastor of the Hartford Church was Connecticut's great legislator also.

In the May following the adoption of the new Constitution in January, 1639, Mr. Hooker and Mr. Haynes, the governor, were in Boston on the business of a treaty of confederation with Massachusetts; and the same year saw the organization of the church at New Haven, where the tradition is that Mr. Hooker and Mr. Stone were present as representatives of the Hartford Church.

Meanwhile events were onmoving in England. The parliament, known as the Long Parliament, began its session in 1640. Laud, who had been the chief agent in driving out of

the old country a large part of the ministers in the new, was himself imprisoned in 1641. The king or the parliament was to break. The ecclesiastical constitution shared the general disorder. Presbyterianism, Episcopacy, Independency, were all eagerly contended for, though by parties having very unequal numerical strength. In this state of affairs a General Assembly was ordered by Parliament, and being contemplated the American exiles were not forgotten. Mr. Cotton of Boston, Mr. Davenport of New Haven, and Mr. Hooker of Hartford, were sent to by the Earl of Warwick, Oliver Cromwell, and some thirty-seven other Independent members of parliament, to "assist in the synod." Mr. Cotton and Mr. Davenport inclined to go. Mr. Hooker, with characteristic sagacity discerning the numerical weakness of the Independent interest in the assembly as it was actually constituted, declined. The matter fell through with all the American divines, and the event proved anew the accuracy of the Hartford Pastor's judgment.

The English Assembly issued a Presbyterian platform. This fact gave new encouragement to a few eminent ministers in Massachusetts colony whose views favored that form of church policy. Fearful of the spread of such views to the subversion of the "congregational way," it was deemed best to hold a synod in Cambridge to emphasize Independent principles. The synod met in September, 1643, and was composed of "all the elders in the country," about fifty in number. Here again, as in 1637, Mr. Hooker, joined this time with Mr. Cotton, was one of the moderators.

But apparently the conclusions were not conclusive. The party of Presbyterianism grew. A meeting was held at Cambridge, July 1, 1645, at which it was agreed to send over to England for publication certain books in reply to the Presbyterian arguments, which had been written by ministers here. Among these books were Davenport's answer to Paget known as the "Power of Congregational Churches," and Hooker's "Survey of the Summe of Church Discipline" in reply to Rutherford's "Due Right of Presbyteries." The

first copies of these books were lost in the vessel which sailed from New Haven in January, 1646, and never heard of more, save in the phantom of it which appeared two years and five months afterward, and which John Davenport declared was sent for the comfort of surviving friends of the vanished crew. The books, thus lost, were laboriously rewritten, again sent, and published; Hooker's, however, not printed till after his death. Of Mr. Hooker's Survey of Church Discipline it can here only be said, that with far more of erudition and historical learning, it divides with John Cotton's "Keyes" the place of chief authority in early Congregational literature.

By May of 1646, the peril of a subversion of ecclesiastical usages seemed so great that Massachusetts summoned the synod which had passed into history as the Cambridge Synod, and the promulgator of the Platform of that name. The synod met on the 1st of September, for its first fortnight's session. Mr. Stone was present, but Mr. Hooker was not there. He wrote a letter to his son-in-law Shepherd excusing himself on account of age and infirmities. The synod adjourned until June 8th of the following year. Regathered at that date it was almost immediately adjourned again by reason of an epidemic throughout New England.

The sickness was very severe in Hartford. Many of the citizens died of it. One of them Treasurer William Whiting. But its most shining mark was the Pastor of this Church. Governor Winthrop in his diary records: "That which made the stroke more sensible and grievous both to them [of Connecticut] and to all the country was the death of that faithful servant of the Lord, Mr. Thomas Hooker, pastor of the church in Hartford, who for piety, prudence, wisdom, zeal, learning, and what else might make him serviceable in the place and time he lived in, might be compared with men of greatest note; and he shall need no other praise; the fruits of his labors in both Englands shall preserve an honorable and happy remembrance of him for ever." This wise and eloquent eulogy cannot receive at this time, and needs scarcely at any time, any amplification. Some

twenty-three volumes, mainly of sermons and expositions, remain to us from Mr. Hooker's hand. They give us, in their vivacity, pungency, and power, a little glimpse of the majestic man. His theology was of the sternest Calvinistic type. He was a "Hopkinsian before Hopkins." But mingled with all his sternness and strength is a beauty and felicity most unusual to his time, unexampled among his New England associates. In extent of learning probably none of them but John Norton could compare with him. He was a man of whom it was said that "on the Lord's business he could put a king in his pocket."

Mr. Hooker died July 7, 1647, at the age of sixty-one, and it is said on the anniversary of his birth. His mortal part lies mouldered back to dust just behind this church. His memory is that of one of the best and greatest of men.

Upon the death of Mr. Hooker the Church does not seem to have contemplated the possibility of long continuing without another minister. Mr. Stone was only forty-four years old, but the theory of the dual ministry with which the New England churches had begun, was not yet worn out. So measures were at once taken to secure a successor to the late Pastor.

The seed planted in the founding of Harvard College in 1636 had already begun to bear fruit. And the first man to whom the Hartford Church turned was Jonathan Mitchell, still a student there. Mr. Mitchell, however, was not destined to become pastor of the Hartford congregation, although promptly and earnestly invited. He speedily after settled in Cambridge, and died comparatively young, but leaving an illustrious name in New England history.

Neither was Michael Wigglesworth so destined, nor John Davis his classmate, nor John Cotton, son of the famous Boston John, who for quite a protracted period lived at Hartford, studied divinity with Mr. Stone, and ministered to the congregation.

Michael Wigglesworth's candidacy, at different times in 1653 and 1654 (for such his diary shows it to have been)

may, however, be mentioned as probably affording the most distinctly recognizable provoking occasion of the series of events which give to the next few years of this Church's history its chief and melancholy interest. This period, from about six years after Mr. Hooker's death to about four years before the death of Mr. Stone, or from 1654 to 1659 inclusive, is remembered mainly for a quarrel in the Hartford Church, of such virulence, contagiousness, and publicity, that it attracted the attention of all the churches in New England, and occupies a large place in every history of early ecclesiastical affairs in this country.

Into the perplexing and prolonged details of this controversy it would be utterly impossible to enter on this occasion with any minuteness, though I have elsewhere endeavored to follow it out in all ascertainable accuracy. It is a controversy which Cotton Mather and Dr. Benjamin Trumbull and Dr. Leonard Bacon have all spoken of as obscure, even to the point of being almost incomprehensible. But this conclusion of these eminent historians I am convinced was owing chiefly to two causes. First, a generous unwillingness on their part to recognize the largely personal element in the controversy, arising from the contact and conflict of the two very pronounced individualities of Mr. Goodwin and Mr. Stone; and second and mainly, the absence from their knowledge of the contents of certain documents only comparatively recently discovered and published, which afford help in the solution of the trouble, of the very greatest assistance.

It has been customary in the attempts which have been made to explain this unhappy passage in the Church's history, to ascribe a very large agency in it to the agitation of the questions concerning Baptism, and the rights of children of baptized persons who were not communicants,—questions which began, certainly, to be mooted before this period, and which not long after this period came to open conflict, resulting in the rupture of this Church in 1670. But it may well be questioned whether the influence of this factor in the quarrel in Stone's day has not been very much exaggerated, if

indeed it can be said to have perceptibly existed at all. Not one of the twenty-one contemporaneous documents, of various object and authorship, among the newly discovered manuscripts published by the Connecticut Historical Society in 1870, speaks of this matter of Baptism as in any way an issue in debate ; a fact utterly impossible to account for, not to say utterly impossible in itself, had the rights of church-membership based on Baptism been a recognized feature of the controversy. And even a careful reading of the historian Trumbull, who wrote in ignorance of these much-illuminating papers, will show that he conceived the agitation of the Baptism question to have been not of the substance of the quarrel, but, as he says, a matter of "meanwhile," and for which certain parties "took this opportunity."

Believing thus that any treatment of the quarrel which resulted in Elder Goodwin's party leaving Hartford for Hadley, consistent with the documents in the case, must proceed substantially independent of that other discussion concerning baptismal rights which to some extent ran parallel with this, continued after it, and finally resulted in the separation of the Second Church of Hartford from the First, I shall here only indicate in the barest way what sorts of events they were which thus turmoiled the peace, not only of this Zion, but involved in it, all our New England Israel.

All accounts agree that the quarrel commenced in an antagonism between Teaching Elder Stone and Ruling Elder Goodwin. There is a high degree of probability that its first recognizable point of outbreak, and perhaps its very occasion, was the refusal of Mr. Stone to allow the Church to vote on Mr. Michael Wigglesworth's "fitness for office in ye church of Hartford," thus infringing, as Mr. Goodwin claimed, on the "rights of the brotherhood."

As the quarrel progressed it was attended by such incidents as these : the indignant resignation of his office by Mr. Stone, yet his after resumption of its functions as if he had not resigned ; the practical deposition of Mr. Goodwin, the Ruling Elder, from his functions by the Church's

choice of a "moderator" to preside in its meetings; the withdrawal of Mr. Goodwin and his sympathizers from communion with the majority who adhered to Mr. Stone; the commencement of processes of discipline by the Church against the withdrawing party for so doing; the summons of an ecclesiastical council, composed of churches of this colony and of New Haven; and then of another of churches of Massachusetts, their messengers traveling through the far wilderness, before whom each party pleaded its case; public days of humiliation and prayer appointed by the Massachusetts churches in behalf of the Hartford Church and for the success of the council; the interposition of the General Court with repeated well-meant and blundering endeavors at reconciliation; the aggravation rather than the healing of the strife; the final review of the whole matter and "Determination" thereupon by a council at Boston, after a ten days' session, in September and October, 1659; the acceptance of the "sentence" by both parties, and the removal of Elder Goodwin and most of the minority party to Hadley,—these, in the rapidest and most meager outlines, were the main features of the first great quarrel in the Hartford Church. It began, probably, so far as anything visible was a beginning, in a question of personal preference for a pulpit candidate; it found expression in a dispute touching the official prerogative of the two chief officers of the Church; it broadened out as it went into a controversy concerning the claims of the brotherhood and the rights of a minority, and of the proper methods of securing ecclesiastical redress when those rights were infringed. It brought up many interesting questions of Congregational order, but the personal element was all along the baffling and potential quantity.

Mr. Goodwin was a very able and reverend man. But we remember that before the Church left Massachusetts he had been reprov'd in open court for his "unreverend speech." And it may be fairly questioned whether the very vigor and pertinacity with which he exercised what he regarded as the proper functions of his ruling eldership, was not one of the

most persuasive arguments with the Church for never appointing another. Certainly another never was appointed.

Mr. Stone, too, was an exceedingly reverend and able man. But he obviously took very high views of the prerogatives of his office. His conception of ministerial authority belonged more to the period in which he had been educated in England, than to the new era into which he had come in New England. His own graphic expression, "A speaking aristocracy in the face of a silent democracy," is the felicitous phrase which sets forth, at once, the view he took of church government, and the source of all his woes. On the whole, respecting the controversy itself which turmoiled the Church so long, the impartial verdict of history must be that, spite of many irregularities and doubtless a good deal of ill-temper on both sides, the general weight of right and justice was with the defeated and emigrating minority.

Mr. Stone survived this passage in his experience about four years. They were years of apparent harmony in the Church and comfort to himself. He was a man of popular qualities and great conversational gifts, but he was also a man of the utmost sincerity and devout piety. The estimation in which he was held by his fellow-townsmen is shown in the very name our city bears; the place of Mr. Stone's birth being chosen, rather than that of any other of its founders, as the name of the new home in the wilderness. He died July 20, 1663, at the same age as his more illustrious companion, Hooker—sixty-one years. And he sleeps beside him in the old cemetery.

The year after the adjustment of the long quarrel, and three years before Mr. Stone's death, an associate minister was secured for him in the charge of this Church.

Rev. John Whiting was ordained colleague with Mr. Stone, probably in 1660. He was the son of Mr. William Whiting, an early settler of the colony, and its treasurer. He was born in England, in 1635, but was educated at Harvard, graduating in 1653. He preached a while at Salem, Mass., but removed to Hartford to undertake the associate work of this Church of his childhood.

During the three years of Mr. Stone's survival, after Mr. Whiting's coming, the new minister seems to have performed the largest part of the work ; but at Mr. Stone's death the people were still too full of the primitive idea of a dual ministry to think of devolving the work on Mr. Whiting alone. Consequently, almost immediately upon the death of the old Teacher, Rev. Joseph Haynes was invited to an associate ministry with Rev. John Whiting.

Mr. Haynes, like Mr. Whiting, was a Hartford man. He was the son of Governor John Haynes ; was born about 1641, and graduated at Harvard College in 1658. He began his joint ministry with Mr. Whiting some time in 1664.

Here, then, were two young men—Whiting at his settlement was twenty-five, and Haynes at his settlement, four years later, was twenty-three—of common associations and mutual fellowships in town and college, united in the pastoral care of a Church which was the mother of them both. What fairer prospect could appear for a happy and prolonged associate ministry ? Nevertheless, two years after the settlement of the younger man, we find the two Pastors in open conflict, the Church divided into parties, an ecclesiastical warfare in lively progress, which in less than four years more resulted in the permanent rupture of the body known as the Church of Hartford into two separate religious organizations.

A vivid picture of one scene of the drama in June, 1666, just when the sharper phase of the struggle was beginning, is preserved for us by the pen of Rev. John Davenport of New Haven.

The curtain lifts on the spectacle of "yong Mr. Heynes" sending "3 of his partie to tell Mr. Whiting that the next lecture-day he would preach about his way of baptizing, and would begin the practicing of it on that day." Lecture-day came. Mr. Haynes preached. "Water was prepared for Baptism," which Mr. Davenport says, "was never administered in a weeke day in that church before." But up stood the senior Pastor, Mr. Whiting, and, "as his place and duty required, testified against it and refused to consent." A

wordy contest began. Rev. John Warham of Windsor, now an old man, and repentant of his seven years' practice of the way of baptizing which he now repudiated, was present, probably by request of the senior Pastor, Mr. Whiting. Presuming on the "common concernment to all the churches" of the matter in debate, he attempted to speak, but was "rudely hindered" by the exclamation, "What hath Mr. Warham to do to speake in our church matters." The meeting apparently broke up in disorder, but was followed by a challenge from the younger to the older Pastor for a public "dispute about it with Mr. Whiting the next Lecture day,"—an ecclesiastical contest which probably came off according to programme, as Mr. Davenport says it was "agreed upon," but of which no account remains to us.

This contest between Mr. Whiting and Mr. Haynes about baptism was only an incident in a general conflict of opinion and behavior in the New England churches at large, about this period. The subject can only be treated of on this occasion in the briefest manner.

The original theory upon which the churches were gathered on this side of the Atlantic was the personal regenerate character of the membership. "Visible saints only are fit Matter appointed by God to make up a visible Church of Christ," was the language of Mr. Hooker, which may be said to express the generally accepted view of the primitive New England churches. But this view of the only proper constituency of the Christian Church, taken in connection with the very vigorous tests of personal experience which were deemed necessary to mark "visible saints," left a considerable number of people of good moral character, and some of real piety, outside any church fellowship, and destitute of a voice in the selection of a minister, whom nevertheless they were legally bound to support. And it left a growing body of young people in every community who, having been baptized in infancy, were accounted in a manner church-members, but lacking the criteria of conscious regeneration, were deprived not only of an

invitation to the Lord's Supper, but of the privilege of presenting their children for baptism. The difficulty was a two-fold one, having reference to adult people never "confederated" into the churches of New England, yet bound to support their ministers, and to the children of "confederating parents" who came to years of maturity and parenthood without the experiences which were regarded necessary to full participation in church privileges.

Quite a number of the ministers of early New England foresaw trouble on this point and were disposed to take such a view of the church, and of the relationship of baptized persons to the church, as would meet at least that part of the difficulty which was experienced by parents who, having been themselves baptized but not admitted to the Lord's Supper, desired baptism for their children. So early as 1634 the church of Boston, under the lead of John Cotton, advised the church of Dorchester that a grandfather might claim baptism for a grandchild, although the intermediate parents were not received into church covenant,—a position, however, which Mr. Hooker in his *Survey* distinctly repudiates. And it appears to be in evidence that the Ipswich church, in 1655, put on record a declaration that the children of adult parents "not scandalous" taking the covenant, should have their children baptized. The Dorchester church took similar action the same year. Salem, under the lead of Mr. Norris, debated and conceded the principle (though apparently delaying the practice) a year or two earlier still.

Connecticut cannot therefore be charged with originating the new departure in enlarging the scope of baptism, although the earliest motion for an authoritative statement upon the subject did come from this colony. The matter was in the air. And the turmoiled condition of the Hartford Church, owing to the long quarrel between its officers, made this question all the more ready to arise. As Dr. Benjamin Trumbull says, "numbers of them took this opportunity to introduce into the Assembly a list of grievances on account of their being denied their just rights and privileges by the

ministers and churches." The ever ready General Court listened to the appeal. In February, 1656, it appointed Mr. Warham of Windsor, Mr. Stone of Hartford, Mr. Blinman of New London, and Mr. Russell of Wethersfield, delegates to a ministerial assembly called by Massachusetts at Boston to consider twenty-one questions concerning the matters in debate. The session of the ministers began June 4, 1657, and continued a fortnight. The answers they gave to Connecticut's twenty-one questions were a substantial endorsement of the claim to baptism and so to church-membership, of all children of baptized parents "not scandalous" who themselves "own the covenant." This virtually carried with it the conclusion of the right of all baptized persons to vote for the minister, and was so far an acceptance of the "parish way" of Old England against the church way of New England. The findings of the ministers were reported by Mr. Stone to the General Court in August, 1657, and by the Court commended to the consideration of the churches. Mr. Warham and the Windsor church began the practice of half-way covenant baptism the 31st of January following, but gave it up in March, 1665.

Nevertheless the churches generally were slow to accept the change. The agitation however continued, and the Synod of 1662 was called in view of it. Neither Connecticut nor New Haven Colonies were represented in this Massachusetts Synod of 1662, but it ratified by a vote of more than seven to one the principles set forth in the answer given to the tenth of the Connecticut Questions by the Ministerial Assembly of 1657; thus setting the endorsement of a Synod of the Churches to what is known as the Half-Way Covenant.

Encouraged by this sanction and discouraged by the attitude of the Hartford Church and other churches in this Colony, an appeal to the General Court was made in October, 1664, by Mr. William Pitkin (a very able, and, there is ample evidence, a sincere and godly man) and several others, which was in effect a claim that, having been baptized members of

the English National Church, they ought to be accounted on that basis and without further qualifications members of the local New England churches where they resided. The appeal met with sympathy. The Court responded with an intimation of readiness to order the churches so to practice "if they do not practice without such order." It was in effect an explicit notice to the churches that the Government was in favor of the parish way, or, as it had begun to be called, the "Presbyterian way" of a State Church, rather than the way of Robinson and Hooker.

It is at about this point that John Davenport lifts the curtain on the Thursday lecture-day scene I spoke of a few minutes ago. Up to this time, as Mr. Davenport declares, "the most of the churches in this jurisdiction" were strong on the old platform of a church consisting of "visible saints" only, and of baptism administered only to children of those in full communion. But the tide was against them, or against the principle on which they stood. For years the influence from over the water at home had been adverse. Presbyterianism had beaten Independency in England, and had succeed to about all the "largeness" of Episcopacy, till itself had been superseded by a re-established Episcopal National Church.

"Yong Mr. Heynes" and his party for Synodical authority, the "parish-way" and "large baptism" were obviously in the ascendency. Yet the minority could have no ecclesiastical relief. The law of March, 1658, forbidding all separate church assemblies (enacted to defeat Elder Goodwin's withdrawing party in the old quarrel with Mr. Stone) was still in force, and held Mr. Whiting and those who adhered to the anti-synodical, early-congregational way, in subjection to it. The Church and the colony were in a turmoil. The ever meddlesome General Court adopted several ineffectual expedients of redress, wearing out in the process two or three uneasy years. In May, 1669, however, apparently at last despairing of settling doctrinal questions by "orders" and "disputes," the Court passed a resolve giving permission to

all persons "approved according to law and sound in the fundamentalls of the Christian religion," to "have allowance of their perswasion and profession in church wayes." The immediate effect of this action, though the Court had no sympathy with their views, was to open a way of escape from their embarrassment to Mr. Whiting and his minority party in the Hartford Church. On the 22d of February, 1670, he and thirty-one members of this Church with their families withdrew, and formed themselves by the advice of council into the Second Church of Hartford. The platform of principles they adopted is a striking and vigorous statement of original Congregationalism, in opposition to the synodical or Presbyterianizing tendency of the time. It was a noble and timely utterance. But it significantly illustrates how in the process of a controversy the watchwords and the stress of battle often change, that the new church which went off from the old as the representative of old Congregationalism began, on the very day of its organization, to practice half-way covenant baptism. The original question at issue had been the relation to the church of those who, having been baptized in infancy or in England, desired a voice in church action and a part in church privileges. It came, in the six years of struggle, to be a question of, relatively, almost a theoretic interest, concerning synodical authority and self-government. The tide on the baptism question was too strong for any party to resist. Its original opponents abandoned even the attempt. Mr. Whiting continued the honored pastor of the Second Church till his death in 1689. The separation into two societies involved of course an alteration on the way of defraying ecclesiastical expenses, all having previously been done by town vote.

Left in charge of this Church Mr. Haynes remained its sole minister. Apparently the experience of the Church had satisfied it with the trial of the dual pastorate. It did not repeat the experiment for a hundred and ninety-two years.

Committed to the half-way covenant principle, inclined to favor "large congregationalism" and synodical super-

vision, the old Church swung with the general drift of the tide at that day. Mr. Haynes ministered to it till, at the still early age of thirty-eight years, he died May 24, 1679, having served the Church fifteen years; four in connection with Mr. Whiting, and eleven as sole Pastor. He was buried beside his father, the honored governor of the colony, and beside Hooker and Stone, the ministers of his boyhood and youth.

Mr. Haynes was succeeded in the pastorate, some time late in 1679 or early in 1680, by Isaac Foster. In the historical sermon preached by Dr. Hawes on June 26, 1836, two hundred years after the arrival of the Newtown Church on its present soil, the preacher says of Isaac Foster: "The late Dr. Strong remarks of him, that 'he was eminent for piety and died young.'" Dr. Hawes adds: "This is the only record that remains of him, and places him among the just whose memory is blessed."

Fortunately the developments of time enable us to ascertain a little more fully the facts of Mr. Foster's story; though, as his pastorate was short and uneventful, they must be shut up here into the narrowest compass. He was born, probably in 1652, son of Captain William Foster of Charlestown, Mass. He graduated at Harvard College in 1671, and in the autumn following was captured by the Turks while on a voyage with his father to Bilboa. Ransomed from captivity in 1673, he held a fellowship for some years at Harvard College, where his eminent gifts attracted toward him the notice of several churches. Overtures were made to him in behalf of the churches of Charlestown and of Barnstable, Massachusetts. These, for one reason or another failing, he was, in January, 1679, sounded respecting a call to the pastorate of our neighboring church of Windsor. A curious correspondence remains between Rev. John Whiting of the Second Church here, and Increase Mather of Boston, the object of which on Mr. Whiting's part was to find out how Mr. Foster stood on the questions which had so recently divided the Hartford Church. The correspondence cannot

be quoted here, but it plainly appears that the art of finding out how a man stands on the main theological issues of his time has not made much progress since 1679. Mr. Foster had all the wise caution of a modern candidate for a pulpit in a pretty evenly divided community, yet on the whole leaned to the "large congregational" side. The church at Windsor, however, called him after hearing him preach, and did it with enthusiasm. The matter there, nevertheless, fell through. It fell through, moreover, in curious coincidence with the vacancy in the First Hartford Church, caused just at that time by the death of Mr. Haynes. It seems probable that the leaning of the Windsor church toward the stricter Congregational party, and especially Mr. Foster's candidature in a manner under the surveillance of Mr. Whiting and others representing that party, may not have been altogether acceptable to the undoubtedly "pious" but obviously politic young minister; so that as a fact the call to the, just then, stricter Congregational church of Windsor was negatived, and a call to the more "Presbyterially" inclined Church of Hartford was accepted; and Mr. Whiting had him—instead of a neighbor six miles off—a townsman next door. Just when he was invited here, or when he came, cannot be told, all church records up to this period having vanished. But his ministry was short. He died August 21, 1682, in one of those epidemical sicknesses with which early Hartford seems to have been so often afflicted.

Mr. Bradstreet of New London, records in his journal: "He was aged about thirty, a man of good Abilyties. His death has made such a breach yt it will not easily be made up."

The young Pastor lies with his predecessors. The slab above him records at once his own burial place, and that of his successor; a successor who not only took his office but married his widow, and so he vanished from among men.

The successor who thus doubly came after Mr. Foster was Rev. Timothy Woodbridge. He was the son of Rev. John Woodbridge (himself son of a clergyman of the same

name), who was ordained pastor at Andover, Mass., October 24, 1645; but returning to England became minister of Barford St. Martins in Wiltshire, where his son Timothy was baptized, January 13, 1656. Ejected from his parish, however, at the Episcopal restoration, he returned to America in 1663, and became an associate with his uncle, Thomas Parker, in the ministry at Newbury. Of young Timothy, who was seven years old on his father's return to America, nothing beyond his baptism is known till his graduation at Harvard College in 1675. Then follow eight years of considerable obscurity respecting him, till he appears at Hartford in 1683, supplying the pulpit "of the first church and congregation formerly under Mr. Isaac Foster's ministry." He was not, however, ordained in the ministry here till November 18, 1685. With Mr. Woodbridge the records of Church and Society first begin, all previous documents distinctly belonging to them having disappeared.

The time at which Mr. Woodbridge entered on his ministry was a rather gloomy one. The demoralizing influence of the wars with the Indians where the Indians were hostile, and of intercourse with the Indians where they were friendly, was visible on every side. The operation of the half-way covenant was becoming manifest. The churches were becoming filled with people sufficiently religious to be church-members and impart church-membership to their children, but not religious enough to profess or to have any personal experiences of repentance or faith or to come to the Lord's Supper. Sins of drunkenness and licentiousness were astonishingly prevalent in a community only a few years previous marked by devoutest manners and sternest principles. It was in 1683, the first year of Mr. Woodbridge's preaching at Hartford, that Samuel Stone, the son of the honored former Teacher of this Church, and himself having been a "preacher some years with general acceptance," after a day spent "first at one and then at another tavern," fell into the Little river and was drowned. The general political disturbances which attended the death of the profligate King Charles; the accession of James II

the same year Mr. Woodbridge was installed Pastor; the arrival of Andros in Boston in 1686, and in Hartford in 1687; the excitement attending and following the hiding of the Charter; the English revolution and the accession of William and Mary, and declaration of war between England and France, were all unfavorable to the prevalence of order and piety in the town and in the colony. Meantime it is apparent from various sources that more than the usual severity of flood and storm and disease and scantiness of harvest, marked a protracted period of time, so that the twenty concluding years of the seventeenth century were among the darkest of New England history.

In the midst of this prevalent depressed state of religion, it is in evidence that the ministers of this and other colonies made earnest efforts to stay the general tide. In response to the recommendations of the Reforming Synod of 1679, and to recommendations of the General Court, and to deep convictions of their own, they labored, if not with fully illuminated, certainly with sincere endeavor to reform morals and increase godliness. Something we need not hesitate to call revivals of religion, however imperfect the standard of estimate, from time to time appear. Such an experience came to this Hartford Church in the winter and spring of 1695-6.

It was at an hour of general alarm on account of Indian disturbances a little way up the river. The crops of the previous season had been cut off. The community was under unusual religious impression. The result is seen on the Church records. Between February 23, 1696, and April 5th of the same year, one hundred and ninety-four persons, an equal number of either sex, gave assent to the covenant. It is, however, a significant commentary on the imperfection, perhaps of the reviving itself, and certainly of the religious system under which it took place, that on Sunday following the last above mentioned, when those admitted to "full communion" as the fruits of this winter's awakening were received, there were but twelve.

Six deacons appear to have been elected to office in Mr.

Woodbridge's pastorate, three in 1691, and three in 1712. The election of the first three was apparently a matter of much deliberation. On March 11, 1686, the names of five persons were "proposed to ye church and left to their consideration." But action was not taken till April 23, 1691, when "Paul Peck, Senr., Joseph Easton, and Joseph Olmstead were chosen Deacons." No record of formalities about the choice of John Sheldon, John Shepard, and Thomas Richards remains.

As early as 1694 the people on the east side of the Connecticut River petitioned the Court to have the "liberty of a minister" among themselves. The request, acceded to by the Court, was rather grudgingly allowed by the Old Church on condition that "all the land on the east that belongs to any of the people on the west side shall pay to the ministry of the west side, and that all the land of the west side shall pay to the ministry of the west side, though it belongs to the people of the east side." Some controversy and trouble ensued. But time at last adjusted differences, and March 30, 1705, saw the ordination of Rev. Samuel Woodbridge, a nephew of Timothy of the First Church, over the church of East Hartford. The date of the church organization, as a body ecclesiastically separate from the parent Church, it seems impossible exactly to determine. Less friction appears to have attended the setting off of the West Hartford church and society, which events occurred with a good degree of amicableness in 1713.

Mr. Woodbridge was a man of large frame and strong constitution, but he appears to have been absent nearly two years from Hartford as an invalid in Boston between 1701 and 1703. Several, and some of them rather pathetic endeavors "to condole with Mr. Woodbridg under the sorrowful circumstances," appear on the Society records. Meantime the pulpit was supplied "att Thirty Shillings ye Sabath" by Ephraim Woodbridge, a nephew of the pastor, and by John Read and Nathaniel Hubbard, afterward distinguished lawyers in Massachusetts, who both appear to have tried preaching before settling down to law.

There is ample evidence that Mr. Woodbridge occupied a prominent position as a minister in the colony. Concerning the two most considerable episodes of his life which illustrate this fact there cannot, however, on the present occasion be afforded space to go into any detail. Respecting the former of these passages of his history—his agency in the founding of Yale College and his controversy respecting its location,—only this can here be said :

Mr. Woodbridge was one of the "ten principal ministers of the colony" nominated as "Trustees or Undertakers . . to found, erect, and govern a college." The old story of these men meeting in Branford in the year 1700, and laying a number of books upon the table, saying, "I give these books for the founding of a College Library in the Colony," is familiar to all. But Mr. Woodbridge, in sympathy with Mr. Buckingham of the Second Church, who became Trustee in 1715, and in sympathy doubtless with most of the people in this northern part of the colony, wanted the permanent abode of the college, which had maintained hitherto a rather divided and peripatetic existence at Saybrook and Killingworth, and Milford and Wethersfield, to be fixed at the last named, neighboring place. And perhaps the most dramatic incident of Mr. Woodbridge's whole history, may be found in that passage of it, when, having in various ways voted, remonstrated, and labored against the location of the college at New Haven, he presided at a rival commencement at Wethersfield, in defiance of the plain votes of the Trustees, and of the General Assembly, fixing the college at the former place. The occurrence is too pictorial not to claim expression in President Clap's own statement of it. After describing the "Splendid Commencement at New Haven," on September 18, 1718; the dignity of the personages present, and the elegance of the "Latin Oration" with which "the Honorable Governor *Saltonstall* was pleased to Grace and Crown the whole Solemnity," he goes on to say that on the same day, "Something like a Commencement was carried on at *Wethersfield* before a large Number of Spectators; five

Scholars who were originally of the Class which now took their Degrees at *New Haven* performed publick exercises; the Rev. Mr. Woodbridge acted as *Moderator*, and he and Mr. Buckingham, and other Ministers present signed Certificates that they judged them worthy of the Degree of Bachelor of Arts; these Mr. Woodbridge delivered to them in a formal Manner in the Meeting-House, which was commonly taken and represented as giving them their Degrees." The town of Hartford sympathized with its ministers in their rather excited and irregular proceedings, and elected Mr. Woodbridge and Mr. Buckingham the following year, representatives to the Assembly. Mr. Woodbridge prayed at the opening of the session on the 14th of May, but on the 18th his seat was challenged on account of his alleged charging the "Honorable the Governor and Council" in the college affair "with breach of the 6th and 8th commandments." The Lower House voted at first to exclude him from his seat, but subsequently acquitted him of blame. Just how the matter eventuated in the Upper House cannot be determined. Mr. Woodbridge afterward became reconciled to the location of the college at New Haven, was *Rector pro tempore* at the Commencement in 1723, and a Trustee while he lived.

Coincident in point of time with most of Mr. Woodbridge's earlier labors for the college, was his activity in originating and maintaining the Consociational System established by the adoption of the Saybrook platform in 1708. The movement for this system originated, naturally enough, with the trustees of the college, who were about the only ministers of the scattered churches of the colony to be brought by any public duties statedly together; but it was the result of preliminary discussion in the constituent county bodies, and of the consultation of their regularly elected delegates; so that there seems no valid ground for the suggestion which has been made, that the body convened at Saybrook in September, 1708, was not a perfectly fair and fully representative body of the forty churches of Connecticut.

Among the Hartford county delegates to this Synod was Timothy Woodbridge, Pastor of the First Church, and John Haynes, one of its members, son of its former Pastor.

For the purposes of the present discourse it is unnecessary to express any judgment as to the merits of the Saybrook Ecclesiastical Constitution. The system, bad or good, continued the legally recognized one in the State till 1784, and remained the voluntarily accepted method of the majority of the churches much longer. In this Church, whose Pastor and delegate had some hand in its devising, it continued operative one hundred and sixty-two years; and its operation was such as to incline another eminent Pastor to say, at the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary meeting under the Saybrook Constitution, "the First Church of Hartford is a con-sociated church, and such I trust it will ever remain."

The system thus set in working, Mr. Woodbridge energetically supported. Of the local county Association, organized under the system, he was generally moderator till his death. That event occurred, after a period of some months of disablement, on April 30, 1732, at the age of seventy-six years and six months; after his having served the Church in a ministerial capacity forty-eight years and eight months; having being for forty-six years and three months its ordained Pastor. Three hundred and sixteen persons were admitted to full communion, and four hundred and seventy-eight owned the covenant in Mr. Woodbridge's ministry.

Mr. Woodbridge left two extant specimens of his pulpit powers, an *Election Sermon* preached May, 1724, and a *Singing Lecture* preached at East Hartford in June, 1727.

His own funeral eulogium was spoken in an election sermon, eleven days after his death, by his neighbor and friend, the aged Timothy Edwards of East Windsor, son of Richard Edwards of this Church, and concludes with the declaration, which there is, perhaps, no considerable occasion to modify, "that he was one of the choicest and greatest men that has ever appeared among us in these parts of the country."

Two days after the death of Woodbridge, and on the even-

ing of his funeral, measures were taken by the Society of this Church "to treat with Mr. Daniel Wadsworth respecting his settling in the work of the ministry." Mr. Wadsworth had already sometime preached in the later weeks of Mr. Woodbridge's incapacity, and the result of overtures to him was that on the 28th of September, 1732, he was ordained as Pastor. The procedures on the occasion he has himself inscribed on the church record as follows: "The Rev. Mr. Whitman of Farmington, began with prayer, and preached a sermon from Matt. xxiv, 45. The Rev. Mr. Edwards of East Windsor made a prayer, and gave ye charge. The Rev. Mr. Marsh of Windsor made ye next prayer. The Rev. Mr. Colton of West Hartford gave the right hand of fellowship."

The new pastor thus set in place in the twenty-eighth year of his age, was born at Farmington, November 14, 1704, and graduated at Yale College in 1726, in the same class with Elnathan Whitman (son of his old pastor at Farmington who preached at his ordination) who was soon to be his associate in the Hartford ministry as pastor of the Second Church.

The occasion of the new ministry seems to have been laid hold of by the Society for the revival of the already much debated question of a new meeting-house. Into the long struggle over the location of this edifice and the story of its erection, it is unnecessary for me here to enter, the division of labor on this occasion assigning the whole matter to another hand. For the present it must suffice for me to say that the affair, wrangled over for years, was at last happily ended, and a new meeting-house, standing sidewise to the street, substantially on the spot where we now are, took the place of the old edifice in Meeting-House Yard, which had been used from near the planting of the settlement.

The house was dedicated December 18, 1739; the sermon preached by the Pastor on the occasion from Haggai ii, 9, *The glory of this latter house shall be greater than the former, saith the Lord of Hosts*, being published, and affording us our only surviving specimen of Mr. Wadsworth's pulpit powers, which seem to have been of a respectable, though certainly not of a commanding order.

The institution of this pastorate brought also to an issue, in the slow, conservative way which had already become characteristic of the First Church, the very live question of that day, whether to sing "by ear" or "by rule." The service of song had been now for considerable period a matter of discord in many senses. Music for more than a generation past (owing to the introduction of the Bay Psalm Book, having no musical notes, in the place of Ainsworth's or Sternhold and Hopkins', which had the musical score) had become a matter of memory and varying tradition. Direct instruction was wanting; instrumental accompaniments disallowed; so that singing came to the pass of utter poverty and confusion. Tunes called by the same name were scarcely recognized in places a few miles apart. Some congregations did not attempt more than three or four.

The effort to amend matters about the first quarter of the eighteenth century met with violent opposition. Many congregations almost split on the question. The innovation was denounced as an insult to the memory of the fathers, and as tending to Papacy. "If we once begin to sing by note, the next thing will be to pray by rule, and then comes Popery." The interposition of the General Court was in some instances necessary to quiet disturbances arising from the proposal to sing "by rule."

In this Hartford Church the matter took a characteristic course. The old Pastor, Mr. Woodbridge, wanted the reformation and preached a Singing Lecture, as has been mentioned, by request of the Association at East Hartford in June, 1727, in its behalf. He also, as Moderator of the General Association, put his signature to a paper read to that body on May 12th of the same year, by Rev. N. Chauncey of Durham, and published by its order, entitled "Regular Singing Defended and Proved to be the Only True Way of Singing the Songs of the Lord."

But the old Pastor died without the sight of the change he advocated.

With the coming of Mr. Wadsworth, however, enthusiasm

enough was enkindled to induce the Society on the 20th of June, 1733, to take this cautious and tentative action: "Voted and agreed, that after the expiration of three months, singing by Rule shall be admitted to be practiced in the congregation of this Society, and until their Annual Meeting in December next; & that then a Vote be Taken whether the Society will further proceed in that way or otherwise." The two leaders of the opposing methods were then designated "to take on them the care of setting the Psalm" for the periods specified; "Mr. William Goodwin as usuall," and "Mr. Joseph Gilbert, jr., after the Expiration of the three months." Tried thus prudently for four months, the Society saw its way in December to vote "that singing by Rule be admitted and practiced in the congregation of this Society," and Mr. Gilbert was empowered "to sett the psalm."

The favorable issue of the singing controversy, and especially of the meeting-house struggle, must have been very welcome to Mr. Wadsworth and the more spiritual portion of his people. These years of controversy were naturally years of barrenness. Meantime while Hartford Church was quarreling over its location only so far away as Windsor a remarkable revival had taken place under the ministry of Rev. Jonathan Marsh. The year 1735, just in the thick of the meeting-house conflict, was the year of the great revival under Jonathan Edwards at Northampton. It was, however, the year 1740, just after the entrance on the new house of worship, which is commonly taken as the commencement of that religious movement in New England known as the Great Awakening. It was this year that George Whitefield made his first preaching tour through New England. The religious condition of the community was eminently favorable for Mr. Whitefield's success. His youth, his eloquence, his peculiar position as an Episcopal minister in full sympathy with the distinctive doctrines of the Puritans, attracted universal attention and good will. No such general prostration of a community before one man, and he only a young gospel preacher, was ever known before, and none

has been known since. He left Northampton Sunday evening, October 19th, accompanied by Jonathan Edwards as far as the house of Jonathan's father, Rev. Timothy, at East Windsor, preaching at Westfield and Springfield and Suffield on the way. On the afternoon of October 21st he preached at East Windsor, and there Jonathan Edwards gently remonstrated with him about his denouncing the ministers; his practice of "judging other persons to be unconverted;" and the large place he accorded to "visions" and other similar results of religious excitement. Next day, Monday, October 22d, he was here at Hartford, preaching in the new meeting-house, doubtless, to an audience which he describes in his customary exaggerated way, as "many thousands." Thence by Wethersfield, Middletown, and Wallingford, he went preaching to New Haven and so to New York. Some measure of benefit seems to have accompanied or followed Mr. Whitefield's transit through Hartford. The records of this Church show an accession of twenty-five to its "full communion" membership, and of eleven to its "Covenant" in the twelve months succeeding. The records of the Second Church at this date are lost. The church in West Hartford gained forty-five, but whether all to its "communion" I am unable to say.

These certainly do not seem large results for the great year of the Great Awakening. And large or small, they were attended and followed by some features which made all the ministers of Hartford, and most of the Hartford local Association, unite on February 5, 1745, over their individual signatures, in a public printed "Testimony against Mr. Whitefield and his conduct," and a solemn "warning and caution" to their people not to hear him on his proposed second transit through New England. This declaration was followed by another of a like character, five months later, issued by the General Association over the hand of Benjamin Colton of West Hartford, Moderator, and Elnathan Whitman of the Second Church, Scribe.

Why was this? And why was the very awakening which

in its general result so blessed Connecticut, and blesses it to this day, the occasion for a sharp conflict of feeling and judgment among the ministers and the churches? The reason is not far to seek. Dr. Leonard Bacon acutely remarked, "the Whitefield of history is not exactly the Whitefield of popular tradition." It is so. The real Whitefield of the pilgrimage of 1740 was a young man of twenty-five, of burning eloquence and impassioned piety, but censorious, denunciative, and lending all the weight of his tremendous popular influence to the encouragement of fanatic extravagances of experience and expression in his converts and followers. Whosoever hesitated at any of his measures was pronounced unconverted and carnal. In spite of the wise and loving caution of Jonathan Edwards at East Windsor he preached, three days after, at New Haven—and of all congregations to a congregation of students—on the "dreadful ill consequences of an unconverted ministry."

But all of Mr. Whitefield's own extravagances of speech might have been forgotten had it not been for the actions of his followers. Many of these, ordained ministers, either having no proper charge or forsaking it, went through the colony at their own will, encouraging discontent with the settled ministry, and promulgating crude and erroneous tests of piety and the means of attaining it. A numerous crop of lay exhorters rose in the churches, professing infallible ability to discern spirits, especially the spirits of ministers, and passing sudden and damnatory judgment on all who differed from them.

These excesses became so great as to attract in some instances the attention of the civil authorities. One conspicuous case of this kind, which cannot be detailed at any length, is here adverted to only because of a certain dramatic connection with the church edifice of this Society. Rev. James Davenport of Southold, L. I., was one of the most accepted favorites and followers of Whitefield, who pronounced him "nearest to God" of any man he had known. He was a man of a wild sort of eloquence, and wherever he went

created great excitement. Arrested on a warrant from the General Court, together with Rev. Benjamin Pomroy, on a charge of inflaming the congregations he addressed, largely of children and youth, with doctrines subversive of all law and order, he was brought before the Assembly at Hartford on June 1, 1742, about eighteen months after Mr. Whitefield's transit through the place. His trial took place in the meeting-house of this Society, and lasted two days. The town was in a state of excitement bordering on tumult. The partisans on either side rushed together to support or to overbar the sheriff. Again and again it seemed as if the prisoners would be rescued from his custody. The night between the two days was little short of a riot. In the morning the militia were ordered out to suppress disorder. The Assembly adjudged Mr. Davenport to be "disturbed in the rational faculties of his mind," and thus less responsible than he otherwise might be, and directed that he be sent out of the colony. And so, about four o'clock in the afternoon, Mr. Davenport was marched "between two files of musketers" from the meeting-house down to Connecticut river, and put aboard a boat for his home.

All these things show the intensity of feeling connected with the Great Awakening period, and the reasons, to some extent, which made the Hartford ministers, and a large portion of the ministers of Connecticut generally, disfavor a second Whitefieldian pilgrimage. But for so doing they were stigmatized as Old Lights, Formalists, Arminians, inculcators of "mere heathen morality," and careless of the souls of men. Some of Mr. Whitman's hearers deserted his congregation in favor of more spiritual instruction. There was really no just ground for such accusation. The charges were easy to make. They are in substance made in almost any revival period when any one dissents from the counsels of the most fervid promoters of any of its methods. They have in effect been made in very recent days.

Possibly a larger share of benefit might have come to this community had this Church and its immediate neighbors

thrown themselves more into the line with Wheelock and Pomeroy, and even somewhat more generously tolerated Davenport. Possibly also, not. Anyway this community was spared the ecclesiastical scandals which separated churches and dishonored religion in some parts of the State where freer scope was given to the new measures of the new men.

But right or wrong, Mr. Wadsworth's part in influencing religious affairs was soon afterward ended. He died November 12, 1747, lacking two days of forty-three years of age; having filled a pastoral term of fifteen years and two months. He sleeps with his ministerial forerunners in the old graveyard.

Ninety-nine persons were admitted to "full communion," and seventy-four to "covenant" during his ministry.

Rev. Edward Dorr succeeded to the pastorate April 27, 1748, after having preached a considerable period during Mr. Wadsworth's disability. Mr. Dorr was born at Lyme, November 2, 1722. He united with the church in Lyme, June 7, 1741, under the ministry of Rev. Jonathan Parsons, one of the most useful and able of Connecticut's ministers in the era of the Great Awakening. He graduated at Yale College in the class of 1742, and was licensed to preach by the New Haven Association, May 29, 1744. Before coming to Hartford he preached more than two years at Kensington, in the midst of a church and society controversy, unnecessary here to relate. The elaborate and repeatedly modified monetary negotiations recorded on the books of our Society prior to his settlement, significantly indicate the unsettled condition of financial affairs at the period, consequent largely on the colonial indebtedness in the repeated wars with the Indians and the French. Mr. Dorr followed the example of his predecessor by recording on the Church book the procedure at his ordination. "The Rev'd Mr. Bissell [of Wintonbury] began with prayer, ye Rev'd Mr. Whitman [of Second Church] preach'd a Sermon from 2 Cor. 4, 5. The Rev'd Mr. Colton [of West Hartford] made the first prayer. Mr. Whit-

man of Farmington gave the Charge. Mr. Steel [of Tolland] made the second prayer, and Mr. Whitman of Hartford gave the right hand of Fellowship. Give me grace, O God, to be a faithful, and make me a successful minister of the Gospel of Christ.

E. DORR."

The period of Mr. Dorr's ministry was one of great religious declension, which lasted with slight and local interruptions throughout New England considerably beyond the period of his pastorate.

The controversies of the preceding years, growing to some extent out of the Whitefieldian movement ; the separations which took place in many Connecticut churches ; the restiveness of some under the Saybrook platform, and the resolution of others in the administration of the discipline established by that platform ; the corrupting effects of the Indian and French wars, and the absence, however accounted for, of those divine influences which seem at times to triumph over all obstacles,—all combined to make this period of the country's history one of general monotony and discouragement. In the midst of this comparatively depressed state of affairs, Mr. Dorr exercised a faithful and laborious ministry. One hundred and sixty-one persons "owned the covenant," and fifty-three were admitted to full communion, during the twenty-four and a half years of his pastorate. The comparison of these numbers with the seventy-four who owned the covenant and the ninety-nine who were admitted to full communion in the fifteen years of Mr. Wadsworth's ministry, is significant. Especially significant is the striking alteration of proportion between those covenanting and those communing. It is plain that a larger and larger number of people were contenting themselves with such a merely formal assent to the gospel as carried with it the privileges of a qualified church-membership, but implied no spiritual change.

Amid this general state of public anxiety and of religious depression, a few items of local interest may be gathered up. In 1755 it was thought necessary to enlarge the meeting-house, and a committee was appointed for the purpose, but the mat-

ter seemed to go no further. The need could not have been great. All the inhabitants in Hartford at this time, including East and West Hartford, were less than thirty-five hundred, and there were four meeting-houses. In 1756 the Society appointed a committee to inform Mr. Dorr that "this Society are desirous that Dr. Watts' Psalms may be sung in the congregation at the time of divine worship at least half ye time." A good deal of trouble all along these days seems to have attended the always vexatious business of "seating" the people. In the year 1760 the Society took a new course, and "voted and agreed that the inhabitants of this society for the future, and until this society shall order otherwise, have liberty to accommodate themselves with seats in the meeting-house at their discretion, any measures this society hath heretofore taken for seating sd house notwithstanding." This democratic plan did not long suit, however, for four years later the Society voted to "new seat the meeting-house in the common and usual way and manner."

Mr. Dorr's period of ministry witnessed also the first endeavor to plant an Episcopal church in Hartford, by the preaching of Rev. Thomas Davies in 1762. The events connected with that endeavor have recently been narrated in Mr. C. J. Hoadly's lately published and admirable sketch of the history of Christ Church. They probably attracted the attention of Rev. Mr. Dorr somewhat more warmly because the "Sam. Talcott," who seemed to be the most troublesome Sanballat of the new movement, was a "covenant" member of the First Church, and Mr. Dorr's brother-in-law. Mr. Dorr's own attitude on the question of Episcopal separatism, as well as separatism of other kinds, is quite discernible to one who can at all read between the lines in his election sermon preached in 1765, in which he said: "I readily own that every establishment of a religious kind should be upon the most generous and catholic principles, and that no man or set of men should be excluded from it for mere speculative and immaterial points; for different modes and ceremonies. . . . Suffer me to query with your Honors, *whether*

the laws in this Colony made for the support of religion don't need some very material amendment? And if they be sufficient, whether the construction put upon them in many of our executive courts hath not a direct and natural tendency to undermine and sap the foundations of our ecclesiastical constitution?

But if Mr. Dorr was not in advance of his time on the question of toleration of dissenters, this same election sermon shows him in a most amiable and admirable attitude on the question of the treatment of the Indians, which he discusses in another part of it. His views on this latter subject, too extended to quote here, are as well worthy of consideration by our national government to-day, as they were by the colonial government of 1765.

Mr. Dorr's lot was cast in a dull time of our ecclesiastical history; he was cut off from life in the prime of his strength, and without posterity; but the tokens that survive of him give him not only a fair but an honorable place in the ministry of this Church. He died, after many months of paralytic disability, Oct. 20, 1772, in the fiftieth year of his age. Rev. Samuel Whitman of the Second Church preached a funeral discourse, still extant. He was buried beside his predecessors.

After the death of Mr. Dorr the Society of this Church, in December of the same year, made unsuccessful overtures to "Mr. Joseph How"; doubtless the Joseph Howe who was just finishing his tutorship at Yale College, who became pastor of the New South Church in Boston, and who died in 1775.

The next attempt was more successful, and resulted in the introduction to this Church's service of one of the most illustrious of its ministers.

"Mr. Nathan Strong of Coventry," was invited by the Society to the ministry of this congregation, June 4, 1773, and was ordained to the pastorate on the 5th of January, 1774; the sermon on the occasion being preached by Rev. Nathan Strong, his father, from 2 Tim. iv, 4: "*But watch*

thou in all things ; endure afflictions ; do the work of an evangelist ; make full proof of thy ministry." The sermon was published, and gives token that the religious influence which had been brought to bear on the boyhood and youth of the young minister, under his father's instruction, must have been of a robustly vigorous kind. The Pastor thus set in office in this Church was twenty-five years of age, having been born Oct. 16, 1748. He graduated at Yale College in the class of 1769, having among his associates Timothy Dwight, the future president of the college, and receiving at his graduation the first honor of the occasion. Mr. Strong was accustomed to refer the period of his personal spiritual renewal to his early life, but he seems not at first, after graduating, to have contemplated the ministry as a profession, but turned his attention to law. In 1772 and 1773 he was tutor in Yale College ; during which time he devoted himself to theology, and received overtures to the pastorate from several churches. President Stiles is said to have told the committee of the Hartford Church, when applied to respecting the tutor's fitness for the place, that "he was the most universal scholar he ever knew."

The period of the institution of the new pastorate was a trying one. The colonial relationships to Great Britain were just on the point of rupture, and the feeble confederacies on this side of the Atlantic were about entering on a protracted and exhausting war with that then recognizedly chief belligerent power in the world. Divisions of sentiment respecting, not only the details of the struggle, but the main aim and method of it, divided to some extent every community, and very distinctly that of Connecticut.

At the same time the condition of the churches, spiritually considered, was very low. The half-way-covenant sowing was producing its natural harvest. There were only fifteen male members in full communion in this Church when Mr. Strong was set in pastoral charge. As the public conflict progressed, a tide of infidelity set in under the sympathetic influence of French associations in the war for Independence,

and religion became, to an extent unknown before or since in this land, a matter for gibe and contempt.

In this condition of affairs Mr. Strong threw himself with great energy into the conflict for American liberty. He served some time as chaplain to the troops. He wrote and preached in support of the patriotic cause. Especially in the later political discussions connected with the establishment of the Federal constitution he published a series of about twenty articles intended to harmonize public opinion in the ratification of that instrument. It was not probably at all on account of his ardent advocacy of this cause, but it was certainly appropriately harmonious with it, that the convention which ratified the Constitution of the United States, on the part of Connecticut, was held in the meeting-house of this Society in 1788.

Meantime the earlier period of Mr. Strong's ministry cannot be said to have been marked by tokens of spiritual vigor. Perhaps this was, in the nature of events, impossible. It may be, however, that Mr. Strong was lacking in some of those deeper convictions which distinguished and made so powerful his later ministry. It serves perhaps to corroborate this impression, to know that in a considerable part of this portion of his life, Mr. Strong was engaged extensively in the distillery business, with his brother-in-law, Mr. Reuben Smith. The records of Hartford land-transfers show some twenty deeds of real estate involving thirty or forty thousand dollars worth of property, bought and sold by the partnership of "Reuben Smith & Co.," (Nathan Strong's name however generally taking the priority in the deeds made to or by the partners) between 1790 and 1796, together with their vats, stills, and cooper shops, in the prosecution of this enterprise. The venture was ultimately unfortunate from a pecuniary point of view, and in October, 1798, writs of attachment were levied against the property, and, in default of that, against the bodies of Messrs. Strong and Smith, on a judgment against them. Mr. Smith prudently took himself to New York. Mr. Strong remained in the house he had

built (the house just south of the Athenaeum), which was attached under the sheriff's warrant. It is said that the sheriff proposed to take Mr. Strong to jail, but relented when told that he "would go with him if compelled, but if he went he would never enter the pulpit again."

Whether the business distress which began to press upon Mr. Strong several years before this culminating incident of his disaster, had any causal connection with an altered tone in his ministry and a revived condition of things in his Church, it is perhaps presumptuous to assert. But certain it is that the year 1794, at which time the distillery business had broken down and the sale of effects appertaining to it had begun, witnessed the first indication of the spiritual awakening of his flock. One token of this quickened religious interest remains in a vote of the Society, Dec. 16, 1794, "to light the meeting-house for evening lectures"; this being probably the first time religious meetings were ever held in any public building belonging to this Society in the evening. This earliest period of awakening was followed in 1798 and 1799 by a prolonged and powerful revival, which wrought a great change in the religious condition of the congregation. During its progress Mr. Strong published a volume of sermons of a character eminently fitted to awaken and promote a quickening of evangelic piety. This volume was followed by another in 1800, dealing with aspects of religious truth suited to confirm and strengthen those who had been brought under impression. These sermons, together with Mr. Strong's treatise on the *Compatibility of Eternal Misery with Infinite Benevolence*, in reply to a volume—found after his decease among his writings—of Rev. Dr. Huntington of Coventry, show great acuteness of thought, and an unusual vivacity and vigor of utterance. Unlike a great proportion of the sermons of that time, they are readable and might even be effectively preached to-day. They were perhaps the occasion of the conferring on him the degree of Doctor of Divinity by the College of New Jersey in 1801.

No man more than Dr. Strong contributed to the revival

of earnest piety which marked so extensively the close of the last century and the beginning of the present in this State. In 1808, and again shortly before his death, from 1813 to 1815, powerful awakenings in his congregation bore witness to the efficacy of the truth so cogently and persuasively preached by him. Eighty-eight persons united with the Church in 1808, the year after entering on the new meeting-house; and one hundred and twenty-eight joined as the result of the revival of 1813-14. It is greatly to be regretted that the perishing, or, more probably, the non-creation of any Church records (except a few memoranda by Mr. Barzillai Hudson, long a member of the Prudential Committee) during the entire period of Dr. Strong's ministry, makes it impossible to trace precisely who they were, or in what numbers, who united with the Church at any epoch of this pastorate previous to 1808. Especially to be regretted is it, that it is impossible accurately to discover the working of the revival spirit upon the half-way-covenant system in this Church which had practiced it so long. It is doubtful if that system was ever distinctly abrogated in Dr. Strong's day. The late Thomas S. Williams and wife both owned the covenant, it is believed in his time, and only made such a profession as brought them into the Church's full communion in 1834, in the days of his successor.

In 1799 Dr. Strong published, in connection with Rev. Joseph Seward, a deacon of this Church, and Rev. Abel Flint, pastor of the Second Church, the volume known as the "Hartford Selection of Hymns," which attained a wide circulation among the churches, and which contained some metrical compositions of his own. These have been praised, but it can hardly have been for their poetry.

Not the least of Dr. Strong's services to this Church and to the churches generally, was his labor in behalf of Missions. It was largely his interest in the Connecticut Missionary Society, formed in 1798 for the purpose of sending missionaries to the North and West, and of which society he was one of the original founders, that induced him to project

and in part to edit, and for a time largely to write, the *Connecticut Evangelical Magazine*. This monthly periodical was continued for fifteen years. The number of copies during the first five years averaged 3,730 annually. The net profits were paid over to the Connecticut Missionary Society, which received from this source \$11,620.

The year 1807, December 3d, saw the entrance of this Society into this house of worship where we are now gathered, and which was generally regarded at that day, and as such described by Dr. Dwight in his *Travels*, as a masterpiece of ecclesiastical architecture. Stoves were first introduced into this edifice the year before Dr. Strong died, 1815. The pulpit, the height of which it is said was first determined by Dr. Strong, was lowered two feet in 1816, the year he died, and has (incredible as it may seem) been lowered three times since.

In 1802, moved by the renewed sense of religious things in the community, the Society raised a fund of \$4,709 by subscription, to be put on interest till it amounted to \$7,000, then forever afterwards to be "kept entire" for the "support of the ministry in the society." The names of the subscribers are entered in a roll of honor on the Society records. This fund met with the not unusual fate of such funds when the donors are dead and a society gets short of money, as we shall presently have occasion to see.

This Bible, presented to the Church by Mr. Rueben Smith, Dr. Strong's partner in the unfortunate distillery business, and in memory of Deacon Solomon Smith, Dr. Strong's father-in-law, has been in use since 1812.

In 1814, the Church entered on the use of its first conference room, a brick edifice erected on a lot of ground, thirty by fifty feet in dimension, on Theater, now Temple street.

Even this hasty sketch of Dr. Strong's ministry would be culpable did it not refer to his vast power of social influence and his unsurpassed vivacity and wit. The sharpness of his repartee often stood him in better stead than arguments. Many of his sallies and rejoinders are familiar to this day to people of this community.

Dr. Strong had his full share of trouble. Beside those of a financial kind, of which mention has been made, he was called on to bury two wives and a son (the survivor of his second wife Anna McCurdy), who, having just graduated at Yale College, was drowned at the East Hartford ferry. Dr. Strong lived a widower the last twenty-six years of his life.

Negotiations for the settlement of a colleague were in harmonious progress between the Pastor and the Society when death intervened. Dr. Strong died December 25, 1816, in the sixty-ninth year of his age, and the forty-third of his ministry. He was the first of this Church's Pastors to be buried elsewhere than in the old ground behind the church. His mortal part lies in the North Cemetery. His face and figure still survive in the living memory of a few among us, and his name must ever be honored in the annals of this place.

The names of George Burgess, Heman Humphrey, and especially Eleazer T. Fitch, bring us to what seem modern times. All preached here during the months following Dr. Strong's decease, but to none was extended a formal call.

Sunday, the 28th of September, 1817, saw in the pulpit of this Church, for the first time, a tall, awkward man of a little over twenty-seven years of age, who was destined to fill the second longest term of pastoral service in the two hundred and fifty years of its history hitherto. A member of this Church, now deceased, who well knew Dr. Strong, narrated to me his vivid impressions of that Sabbath and the sharp contrast he felt between the courtly and dignified bearing of the pastor of his youth, and the ungainly, impulsive, red-bandannad occupant of his place. But he truthfully added the reproof administered to him by a pious old aunt to whom he ventured to suggest some of his feelings: "Remember my words, that is to be a very remarkable man."

Joel Hawes, one of this Church's and Connecticut's most eminently useful ministers, was born at Medway, Massachusetts, December 22, 1789. His youth was passed amid associations not very congenial to scholarly tastes or even favora-

ble to mental improvement. It was at about eighteen years of age, and while engaged in serving a period in a cloth-dressing establishment that he experienced his first strong spiritual impressions, almost for the first time read the Bible, and became experimentally a Christian. He made confession of his faith by uniting with the church in Medway, the first Sunday in May, 1808, being at that time also baptized. Studying a while in private, under the tuition of Rev. Dr. Crane of Northbridge, he entered Brown University in September, 1809. He worked his way through college, teaching school in winter, but by indefatigable industry and labor graduated September 1, 1813, second in rank in his class. He entered Andover Seminary in 1813; dropped out a year to teach in Phillips Academy, and graduated September, 1817. He had been licensed to preach by the Essex Middle Association on May 13th previous, and followed his licensure by preaching several Sabbaths for Rev. Dr. Dana of Newburyport. Measures looking to his call to the pastorate in connection with Dr. Dana were in progress when he was invited to preach at this First Church in Hartford. He came here on the Saturday following his graduation, and preached his first sermon here on the succeeding Sunday. After trial of his gifts for ten Sabbaths, a call was extended to him by the Church and Society, and on the 4th of March, 1818, he was ordained Pastor, being the tenth in the ministerial succession of the pastoral line. In the public service of the ordination Prof. Fitch of Yale College offered the Introductory Prayer; Dr. Woods preached the Sermon, which was afterwards published, from Heb. xiii, 17; Dr. Nathan Perkins of West Hartford, offered the Ordaining Prayer; Mr. Rowland of Windsor, gave the Charge; Dr. Abel Flint of the Second Church extended the Right Hand of Fellowship, and Rev. Samuel Goodrich of Berlin, made the concluding prayer.

With the induction of Mr. Hawes into the pastorate, a period is reached where the thronging memories of some present, and of more and more in its later portions, will out-

run and outnumber any utterances of the speaker. All the more needful, therefore, will it be for him to confine himself to the main facts of the Church life, with small references as possible to personal biography.

Dr. Strong had certainly been a very able and in most of his ministry a very devout and useful minister; but many things in Church and Society affairs were left by him at strangely loose ends.

Dr. Hawes writes in the first year of the new pastorate: "Our Jerusalem is all in ruins. . . . No church records; no accounts to tell me who are members and who not; what children have been baptized and what not; . . . many irregular members, some timid ones, and I fear but few who would favor a thorough reformation." The new Pastor threw himself into his work with energy and success. Records began to be kept in the Church, unkept or most imperfectly kept for forty-five years. A Prudential Committee, the first in the church's history, was appointed in 1821, to "aid the Pastor in promoting the peace and welfare of the Church, and in the maintenance of gospel discipline," which last portion of their functions there is ample evidence they entered on with vigor.

The same year the new pastorate was established, marks the beginning of Sunday-school work in Hartford. The "Sunday-School Society" was organized on the 5th of May, 1818, Rev. Abel Flint of the Second Church being President, and Mr. Hawes one of the directors. Four schools were formed with special reference to the four then existing religious societies in the place,—the First and Second Congregational, Christ Church, and the First Baptist,—but all under the patronage of the Union Society. This arrangement continued, however, only about two years, when each society took the management of the Sunday-school work into its own hands.

With another action, to which the Church was persuaded about this time, we may or may not perhaps as fully sympathize. The new Pastor had just come from Andover, where the battle lines of the Unitarian controversy were set in

sharply hostile array. And he stigmatized the covenant of the Church here as "a covenant and confession of faith contained in just ten Arminian lines." That covenant, which, with slight verbal change, had been in use in this Church certainly more than a century and a quarter, and perhaps from the beginning, reads as follows:

"You do now solemnly, in the presence of God and of these witnesses, receive God in Christ to be your God, one God in three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. You believe the Scriptures to be the word of God, and promise by divine grace to make them the rule of your life and conversation. You own yourself to be by nature a child of wrath, and declare that your only hope of mercy is through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ, whom you now publicly profess to take for your Prophet, Priest, and King; and you now give up yourself to Him to be ruled, governed, and eternally saved. You promise by divine grace regularly to attend all the ordinances of the Gospel (as God may give you light and opportunity), and to submit to the rule of the government of Christ in this church."

Just where the "Arminianism" comes into this old formula, to which so many generations had given assent in the most solemn transaction of their lives, it is hard to tell. But the Church yielded to the Pastor's desire, and on the 29th of July, 1822, adopted a long, many-articled confession of faith, which, with slight and unimportant modifications, continues in use to this day.

But revivals of religion occurred and marked the epoch of this ministry as none in the history of the Church had been marked before. One in 1819 brought in six young men from the mechanic's workshop, four of whom shortly began to study for the ministry, one of whom, Rev. A. Gleason, still lives.

One in 1820-21 pervaded the entire region, brought into the Hartford County Associated churches more than a thousand converts, and added to this Church one hundred and thirty-eight; three of whom are members with us to-day.

Rev. Lyman Beecher of Litchfield assisted the Pastor in this revival and greatly contributed to its success.

In 1826 was another time of refreshing in this region, and saw as its fruits fifty-four joined to this communion.

In 1831 was tried the experiment of a "protracted" or "four-days" meeting, it is said for the first time in Connecticut, in union with the Second and North Churches. Fifty persons joined this Church as its consequence.

In 1834 an important religious awakening occurred, which brought into this Church many heads of families and men of influence in the community hitherto unreached. The Pastor was aided at this period by the powerful preaching of Rev. Dr. Taylor of New Haven. Between sixty and seventy were, as a consequence, added to the fellowship. The year 1838 brought in eighty.

In 1841 was another great revival in this region. Rev. Mr. Kirk, then in the prime of his popular eloquence and evangelistic fervor, preached in many of the Hartford churches with persuasive power. One hundred and ten persons were added to the Church at this period. More than one hundred stood up at one time in this aisle to confess their new faith. The revival of 1852 brought in sixty-six, and that of 1858 fifty.

Ten periods of distinct religious awakening occurred during this ministry, and there were added to the Church in that space of time, by confession of faith, ten hundred and seventy-nine members.

It is obvious to remark, in view of a fact like this, that the ministry of this eminent Pastor was cast in a period more characterized by general revival influences than any which had gone before for a hundred years, or that, from present signs, seems very likely soon to occur again. But it is equally obvious that these extraordinary results were largely attributable to the man himself who was in this pastorate at that period. His zeal, his wisdom, his perseverance, his profound convictions, his unmistakable sincerity and devotion, were powerful and, it is perfectly proper to say, indispensable elements in that wonderful series of awakenings.

It was itself indicative of one of the features of the Pastor's character which gave him such success in revival work, that Dr. Hawes preached, in 1827, that course of *Lectures to Young Men* which, on their delivery here and in New Haven, produced so profound an impression, and when published, both in this country and in England in repeated editions, wrought a still wider and more lasting benefit.

The volume may seem trite now, but it was a venture into a comparatively fresh and untrodden field then, and aside from any higher ends attained by it, it made appropriate (certainly as such things go) the Doctorate which Mr. Hawes received from the college of his youth.

But if the period of this pastorate was one of large accessions to the church, it was also one of large colonizations from it.

On the 23d of September, 1824, ninety-seven members received dismission from this Church, and were organized as the North Church.

On the 10th of January, 1832, eighteen members were organized with others as the Free, now the Fourth Church.

On the 14th of October, 1852, thirty-six members of this Church, and soon after eleven more, were dismissed to unite with others in forming the Pearl Street Church.

On the 5th of March, 1865, forty members and shortly after eleven more, were dismissed to unite with others in forming the Asylum Hill Church.

The old Church was a quarry out of which everybody was free to draw the living stones of newer temples. It gave liberally. It gave men and it gave money. It was eminently a church-planting and missionary Church.

The personal interest of its Pastor in the larger aspects of missionary work, which has been evidenced among other cogent ways in his giving his only daughter to live, and as it proved, to die on foreign missionary ground, was not without result in training the congregation to large-minded beneficence both at home and abroad.

Meantime, all alongside this really grand record of churchly

prosperity and usefulness ran the usual line of perplexing, amusing, and drudging incidents. Some people of the good old Society loved its privileges, but didn't like to pay for them. And so every year or two, from 1823 to 1848, votes appear on the records showing difficulties about meeting expenses, and expedients to make occupants of good pews, of an economical turn of mind, contribute a due proportion of the parish costs. An Act of the Legislature in the latter year, sought and secured as a means of grace to such, allowing the taxation of pews like any other property, seems to have been the effectual call, where other methods failed.

In 1830 the Society raised the question of the possibility of appropriating something to help the Sunday-school; debated it, doubted its legality, appointed a committee to investigate the novel and difficult question, had a divided report on the issue, thought it best to move slowly, and in 1842 (twelve years afterward), hazarded a first appropriation of a hundred and fifty dollars.

The year 1831 brought up a question of a new conference-room, in place of the old one in Temple street; and the year 1832 brought the conference-room itself, the one now used. But it brought, also, in doing it, the appropriation and extinguishment of the fund so solemnly described in 1802, "to be forever kept entire as a Society Fund, the interest thereof to be appropriated and applied for the support of the ministry in the society."

The year 1822 saw the first organ put into this house, and the year 1835 saw the second—the one just displaced—an instrument so excellent that the Society's extended thanks to the maker of it are inscribed on its records. But, alas, nothing quite suits everybody, and 1837 saw on file the petition of Ezekiel Williams, entreating relief from the terrible "sub-bass" of the dulcet new organ. A committee was raised to harmonize the sub-bass with the petitioner's nerves, with what success does not appear.

The year 1835 lowered the pulpit a second time, and brought the galleries down nearly five feet; and 1851 swept

out the old square pews around the walls, and the mahogany pulpit, lustrous yet, in the memory of some here, above all structures beside.

2. Early in 1863 Dr. Hawes wrote to the Society expressing his desire for a colleague in the ministerial work. The Society voted that it did not want a "colleague," but "a new minister, Dr. Hawes still retaining his pastoral relations to us." Dr. Hawes replied in an extended communication, urging the collegueship, and declaring that the position of *pastor emeritus* proposed by the Society was "a change greater than [he] could at present desire." The Society yielded to his wish, and on the 21st of October, 1862, Mr. Wolcott Calkins was installed Associate Pastor. Mr. Calkins was born at Painted Post (now Corning), New York, June 10, 1831; graduated at Yale College 1856; studied Theology at Union Seminary in 1859, and at the University of Halle in 1860-1862. He was never "licensed" as a preacher, being ordained as well as installed at his entrance on the associate pastorate with Dr. Hawes. Mr. Calkins fulfilled the functions of his office about eighteen months, when, on April 29, 1864, he resigned his associate pastorship. His resignation was followed on the 5th of May by that of Dr. Hawes. An ecclesiastical council met on the 17th of May to consider the resignation of Mr. Calkins, but during its deliberations the case was withdrawn. Reassembled by call, however, on the 6th of July, Mr. Calkins was dismissed, Dr. Hawes being left *pastor emeritus* of the Church.

On the 14th of December, 1864, Rev. George H. Gould was installed pastor. Mr. Gould was born Feb. 20, 1827, at Oakham, Mass. Graduating at Amherst College in 1850, and Union Seminary in 1853, the early portion of his ministry was spent in evangelistic work, chiefly in Wisconsin. He was ordained November 13, 1862, and served as acting pastor of the Olivet church, Springfield, Mass., from 1863 to 1864, when he became Pastor of this Church. Dr. Gould continued in office till the 11th day of October, 1870, when he was dismissed with the concurrence of a council. During

Dr. Gould's pastorate the old and venerated *pastor emeritus* died. This event took place at Gilead, where he had preached the Sunday previous, on May 5, 1867. All his children had died before him. His son, Erskine, pastor of the church in Plymouth, was killed by accident in July 1860, His wife followed him, dying a week afterwards.

Three discourses suggested by the life and death of Dr. Hawes were preached in Hartford. One at his funeral on June 8th, by President Woolsey ; one by Rev. E. P. Parker of the Second Church, and one by Dr. Gould, the Pastor of this Church.

Few are the ministers of New England who have turned so many to righteousness as Joel Hawes.

The pastorate of Rev. Dr. Gould was also marked by the reception by this Society, August 27, 1869, of the Fund devised by Mrs. Mary A. Warburton for support of the services at the Chapel which had been built by her previously (in 1865) on ground purchased by individual members of the Church. In May 1866, a charter for the School at this Chapel was granted to Mrs. Warburton and others. This mission was in 1869 formally adopted under the conditions of Mrs. Warburton's will by this Church. Under varying management and method this Warburton mission has been the scene of the most consecrated and laborious efforts put forth by the younger members of this fellowship in all the Church's later history. It shines in a dark place, and its beams have guided many heavenward.

In the spring of 1871 this Church and Society extended a call to the pastorate made vacant by the dismissal of Dr. Gould, to Rev. William H. Lord, D.D., of Montpelier, Vermont, an invitation which was, however, declined.

More than a year elapsed in unsuccessful quest of a Pastor, when, on April 24, 1872, Rev. Elias H. Richardson, lately of Westfield, Mass., was installed in that office. Mr. Richardson was born at Lebanon, N. H., Aug. 11, 1827, graduated at Dartmouth College in 1850, and at Andover in 1853. He was pastor, successively, at Goffstown and Andover, N. H., Providence, R. I., and Westfield, Mass.

He came to this pastorate in his forty-fifth year of age, and fulfilled in it a most laborious and faithful ministry of about six years and eight months. During this period occurred the series of meetings held in Hartford under the leadership of Mr. D. L. Moody and subsequently of Rev. George H. Pentecost, in the winter of 1877-8.

In connection with these meetings and partly as their direct consequence a large numerical accession was made to the membership of the Hartford churches. About seventy-five names were added to the roll of this Church as such result.

Dr. Richardson left the marks of his own earnest sincerity deeply engraved on many of the younger members of this fellowship, who first of all think of him when they think of their guide to Christian living. He was a man of quick and keen intellectual perceptions, of warm and impulsive temperament, of delicate sensibilities, and devout piety. Something in the intensity of his feelings contrasted with the more deliberate habitudes of the congregation, made the relationship less congenial to him than perhaps it might have been to a man of colder blood. But no truer-hearted servant of Christ ever stood in this pulpit than he.

In December, 1878, Dr. Richardson resigned his pastorate here to accept that of the First church in New Britain, which had been tendered him. He was dismissed here on the 23d of that month, and installed there January 7, 1879.

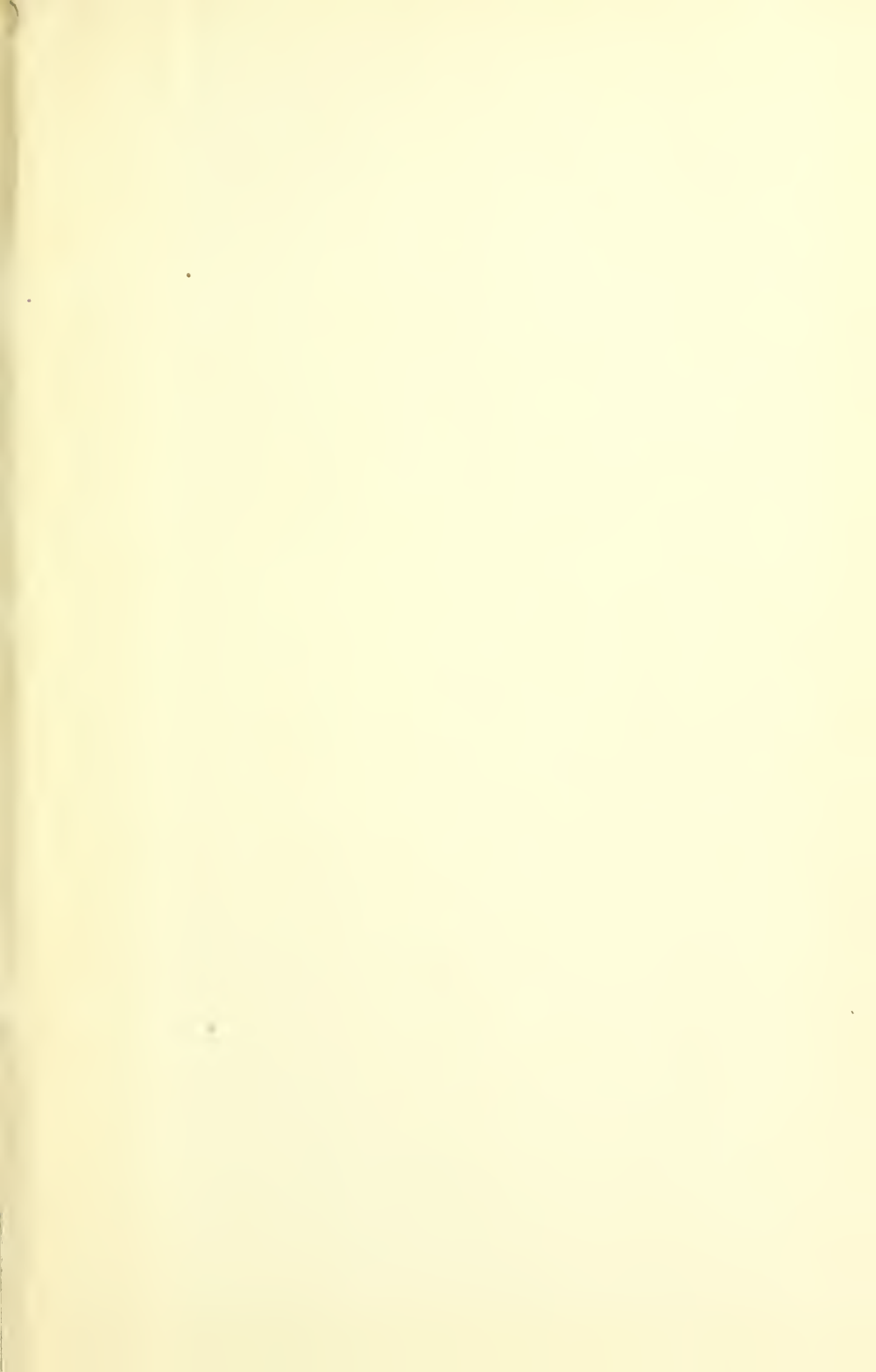
His pastorate at New Britain was eminently useful and happy. He was cut off from it in the full prime of his vigor and success, dying honored and beloved on the 27th of June, 1883, and being buried among the people of his latest pastoral charge. A funeral address on that occasion was pronounced by Rev. N. J. Burton, D.D., of this city, and on the following Sabbath a biographical discourse concerning Dr. Richardson's life and character was delivered in the Pearl Street Church by Rev. Dr. W. L. Gage. He was the first of the ministers of this Church to die elsewhere than in Hartford or to be buried elsewhere than in Hartford soil.

The present Pastor was installed February 27, 1879.

No one can be more sensible than the speaker on this occasion how inadequate the words now spoken are to tell the story of this Church's two hundred and fifty years. The inevitable condensation of a narrative like this, long though it has been, presses out the flavor and perfume of what was, in Time's unfolding of it, a living and sometimes a lovely reality. The dried raisin of commerce is not much like the ripe grape of the vine. It touches one with a sense of pathos and almost of anger to think how much of sweetness and nobleness in private piety in all these years ; how much of faithfulness and self-sacrifice, of parental solicitude and of individual consecrated endeavor in the brotherhood of this Church has been passed over untold, nay, has perished utterly from human remembrance. The deeds, the experiences, the hopes, the cares, nay, even the names of this two-and-a-half century companionship are, and must forever remain, unknown.

But unrecorded in the memories of men, they abide in the better registry of His mind and heart, who in all this duration has been this Church's guide and head.

What remains to us of the story carries with it its own plain lessons, sometimes of encouragement, sometimes of warning ; now of reproof, and now of cheer. But the whole of it points us forward and not backward as the millennial time. This is not our rest. The New Jerusalem was never yet builded on any continent of earthly soil. Now, as ever, we wait the larger promises of the Kingdom of God. The clouds of witnesses who have gone before us seem to say,—and let us join them in the cry,—“ Lord Jesus come quickly.”



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